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## Embedding Technopolis

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## Introduction

Traditional culture persists. Initially, we could be led to think of the reservations in North America for Native Indians. In these places, people live in tipis or other ancient types of dwelling and practice the crafts of their forefathers. Although the tribal wars are no longer fought, tools and weapons like the coup-stick, are created and held in reverence of their traditional sacral character. For modern people, the rain dance is a typical and familiar expression of the traditional nature of this way of life. In New Zealand, the Maoris also have their reservations and negotiate the right to their traditional way of life with the modern government. The reservation seems to be the location of a living traditional culture. For the rest, we can be remembered of it in museums or historical novels and movies. The museum and the reservation carefully guard these cultures, because left to themselves, they would be swept away by modernity. The modern world that several centuries ago was developed in the West, has now spread to practically every corner of the globe.

Contrast the reservation with a city like Tokyo, Hong Kong or Seoul. These are places that are at least as modern as any city in the West. We find modern architecture and global corporations that are competitive in fast-moving high-tech industries. People live in apartments in tall skyscrapers and follow the latest trends in global fashion. The shops, streets and the way people present themselves are as familiar as in any global city. Local dishes give a hint of the past of these societies, but these dishes can probably all also be found in New York or London. If you take the monorail up the mountain to see the Tian Tan Buddha statue in Hong Kong, the image stands aloof at a distance. Down the mountain we can see the world's largest concentration of skyscrapers that by way of the city of Shenzhen is now multiplying as mushrooms all over mainland China, crushing everything that is pre-modern on its way.

These two contrasting images seem to sum up the horizon of our time. Traditional culture only survives in carefully preserved communes, whereas everywhere else people inhabit a single universal modern world.

But what if this point of view is incorrect? What if the reservation is not the place to look for a surviving traditional culture? Being protected and isolated, it might be much more thoroughly shaped by modernity than by the ways of the forefathers. On the other hand, traditional culture might persist more vitally in places where we expect it less. It might be that traditional culture can be located precisely in modern places like multi-story apartment blocks and multinational corporations.

What I want to suggest is that we could unearth how underneath the modern façade that we see most visibly, an inner motivation or directedness of life can be found that is a vibrant continuation of traditional culture. And the most visible traditional dress, skills and tools of the reservations might tell us less of tradition than this inner directedness that we can discern in ostensibly modern phenomena. In order to investigate this disconcerting claim, we need to

carefully analyze what traditional culture in our world amounts to. This has to be done against the background of an understanding of what modernity is and the profoundness of its impact.

We are currently witnessing the greatest migration in human history. Throughout all of history, man has predominantly lived in rural areas. The great empires of the past had large metropolitan capitals like Rome, Memphis or Bagdad as well as other urbanized areas. But the largest part of the population of these empires did not live in cities, which was even more so the case with people living in societies outside the great empires. In this sense, the year 2007 was a watershed year, as it was the first time in the whole of human history that the majority of the population of the planet lived in cities. This process of urbanization is one manifestation of the tremendous change that is happening now and which has no historical parallel. It is of course connected with the spread of capitalist markets to every corner of the world, the process of globalization that has picked up in speed so much over the last few decades. As mega-cities emerge, people migrate to the skyscrapers, building blocks and shopping malls that are everywhere the same.

Yet the phenomenon we are witnessing now is different from anything in the past, not just in its quantity or outwards appearance, but also in its quality. The real migration we are talking about here is not primarily a physical migration. It is a change in our stance or the way we relate to the world and ourselves. As such it is a ‘spiritual’ or inner migration that has become global in nature and which emanates from the process of modernization.

We can gain insight into the nature of this development by looking at the dream that the philosopher René Descartes, who played a central role in the unfolding of modern thought, articulated already in the seventeenth century. He dreamt that man would one day become the “master and possessor” of nature.<sup>1</sup> Descartes is often held to stand at the basis of the process of rationalization and secularization. Related to this, he stands in the line of what the sociologist Max Weber has called the disenchantment of the world. The world has become devoid of spirits, magical forces and divine intervention and Descartes indeed stands in the line of all these different processes that pertain to modernity, but this dream of his also gives us another insight into the heart of modernity. First of all, we have to note that the process of rationalization is here accompanied by a grand dream. It is not incremental or skeptical reasoning, but a great vision of the future that is articulated here. Descartes was not alone in this and it is a type of vision that we can find in a wide variety of projects in the modern era. Secondly, the content of the vision is also elucidating. Becoming master and possessor of nature is a quest for a certain type of control. It is not a dispassionate search for truth that we could expect from a process of rationalization. It is also not a moderate humanistic self-understanding that we could expect from secularization. What I want to argue here is that the radical dream of becoming master and possessor of nature draws on an ancient theme, the figure of the magician. At the heart of modernity we find a dream to unlock nature’s secrets

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<sup>1</sup> R. Descartes, *Discours de la Méthode*, Paris: Dunod, 1997, p. 634

so that we can take control of it. From this control we can then shape it according to our desires. It is the vision to be released from nature's bondage. This goes back to the tale, present in all cultures, of the magician who through his spells can manipulate nature to do his bidding. He does not have to toil under nature's yoke, but instead 'cheats' nature. The world becomes the material for his personal designs. In all traditional cultures, the magician is a phantasmagoric figure. In reality it has been impossible to magically command nature. The magician represents a desire or temptation, but not a reality. We are suggesting here to see modernity and its way of making nature work for us as the realization of the fantasy of the magician. Magic is made real, albeit through rational means.

But above we stated that modernity implies in Weber's terms, a disenchantment. How does that relate to this magical theory of modernity? There is indeed a very real disenchantment in the Weberian sense. He connected it with the Protestant world view, but we can also clearly see it in the work of Descartes. The 'mechanization of the world view' implies that the world is seen as operating under mathematical rules and is not inhabited by spirits or other metaphysical entities. However, this is only one side of the change that occurred in modernity. Together with the disenchantment of nature comes a re-enchantment of man. Weber was in this sense only half right. Clearing the world of magical forces does not mean a sober view of the world and man's place in it. Instead it is accompanied by a vision of man's capacity to master nature and reorganize it according to his wishes. In this sense we can speak of magic at the heart of modernity as man unlocks nature's secrets so as to shape her and wield over her. It is this vision from which modernity's tremendous attraction emanates. Writer Leon Trotsky articulates this vision poignantly when he speaks of the future of man: "Faith merely promises to move mountains; but technology, which takes nothing "on faith", is actually able to cut down mountains and move them. (...) Man will occupy himself with re-registering mountains and rivers, and will earnestly and repeatedly make improvements in nature. In the end, he will have rebuilt the earth, if not in his own image, at least according to his own taste."<sup>2</sup> Modern man no longer takes things on faith. But instead of abandoning the fantastic miracles of faith, he now seeks to actualize them, through technology. This is the inner force that Trotsky saw in the creation of railroads through the mountains of the Alps. Man imitates divine powers in his rebuilding of the earth and in improving on nature. The enchantment of the world of faith is undermined, but its dreams of magical intervention are actualized through rational technical means.

This understanding of modernity helps to explain its tremendous attraction, which around the world seems irresistible. Its force spreads when supermarkets are planted in communities that have previously lived in little contact with the modern world. The supermarket emanates an endless supply of food and other goods, while hiding the means through which they appear. It radiates a release from the painstaking exchange with nature where hard labor creates a small surplus of food. The toil of working under nature's yoke is replaced with the will of the human subject that makes these goods instantly appear with the pecuniary means at its

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<sup>2</sup> L. Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005, p. 204

disposal. In the same manner, the world's youth is drawn from rural areas to the big cities. Advertising and movies show a way of life that is not caught up in the cyclical nature of the generational sequence that is sanctified in rites. These rites are disenchanted while a power is projected on the side of the human subject to mold itself according to its own taste.

From this we can understand how the outwards physical migration is also an inner spiritual migration. The global urbanization is the movement towards a new type of city, which we will call 'Technopolis'. Like any type of polis it is an enclosed sphere of human living together with its own rules and institutions. The nature of this polis is that it is shaped by a technical approach to the world and man. This is not meant in the sense of the specific technologies that surround us, but in the sense of a *way of relating*. The technē of Technopolis denotes the Cartesian and Trotskyite relating to world and self as the objects of mastery that we can shape according to our wishes. It is this driving vision at the heart of modernity that we seek to make manifest with the term Technopolis. This vision drives activity and attracts people all over the world. By using the term 'polis' its visionary character is emphasized, like in Fritz Lang's 1927 movie *Metropolis*, albeit there in a explicitly dystopian version.

The attraction to the magical way of relating of Technopolis is currently becoming manifest as a universal force. The world of Technopolis developed several centuries ago most strongly in the Protestant lands of North-Western Europe and then spread to the United States of America. In the middle part of the nineteenth-century it was forcefully brought to the empires of the East with the colonialization of India, the Opium Wars with China and Commodore Matthew Perry's opening of Japan. What we are seeing now is the conscious and willful appropriation of modernity by the world's two largest nations, China and India, and behind them a whole range of other developing countries. This truly global reach of Technopolis vindicates the older belief in the universality of modernization as it was analyzed by the school of Modernization Theory. This point of vindication was recently taken up and eloquently reinvigorated by Francis Fukuyama in his 1991 book *The End of History and the Last Man*. There he argued that there is a universal directionality inherent in the process of modernization. This process undermines pre-modern modes of living that are different from modernity's matrix of economic, political and overall social organization. On a side-step we might argue in a very specific sense the exact opposite, namely that history has just begun with modernization. The philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder claimed that history is the most exact science because, in contrast with mathematics, its object is entirely human-made. Technopolis makes this claim all the more real, as natural influences are pushed to the background by man's intervention. Next to entirely natural events like floods and earthquakes, we are now confronted with global warming, cloud seeding and possibly even man-made earthquakes. As wealth increases globally, malnutrition and diseases like cholera give way to obesity, diabetes and other 'life-style diseases'. Social conflict emanates less from geographically separated empires fighting over prestige and more from the crowding of

gigantic urban areas.<sup>3</sup> *In this sense of history*, as man-made, we might argue that it has just begun, or at least that it has started a new chapter.

This notwithstanding, the argument of Modernization Theory and its recent defense by Fukuyama on the universality of modernization and the way in which it precludes other pre-modern types of social organization, stands strong. A great part of the traditional world is closed off, ends, with modernity. But this is also where a fundamental problem of modernization, or Technopolis as we have called it, becomes manifest.

To return to our metaphor, by freeing himself from the yoke of nature, the magician also becomes detached from his surroundings. By imposing his own desires on them, the steady patterns of his natural and social surroundings are weakened and thus also their formative influence on human life. These steady surroundings have in pre-modern cultures provided a meaningful horizon for human life. When man's world and his direct surroundings are enchanted, they are meaningful by showing what is good and bad, what is to be desired and what evaded. The world, people around us and our own life are perceived to have ethical bearing, giving us orientation and direction. In Technopolis we are placed outside of this meaningful whole, as the disenchantment of the world means it is transformed into the aggregate of neutral objects at our disposal. So the vision in Technopolis of man's magical capacities goes together with a neutralization of the world around us. And whereas the former is the basis of the great attraction of Technopolis, the latter shows us its problematic side. In Technopolis we are not placed within a meaningful worldly horizon, but placed against a world of neutral objects. Technopolis thus implies a process of 'disembedding'. The unfolding of Technopolis cannot only be described in terms of the spreading of a way of relating of mastery, possession and freedom from shackles, but also has to be seen as the spreading of disembeddedness.

This dual dynamic happens both actively and passively. Actively we find it in the appropriation in daily life of global markets and technology through which individuals shape their world and in the process become detached from their local modes of production and communication. By turning to global food chains and digital social networks, people move out of their local forms of embedding. It is also a process that people undergo without choosing for it. The mastery of the world through modern medicine has globally improved life expectancy leading to a population boom. This way the relatively stable and recurring patterns of village life are fundamentally changed by an upsurge in the population which forces people out of the land of their ancestors and into the growing mega-cities.

The global process of disembedding means a shift from the enchanted world of meaningful patterns that we learn from cultural traditions towards a neutralized world consisting of objects at our disposal. On a more psychological level, this implies a change in the generational link. A culture is kept alive through the transmission from one generation to the next. The weakening of traditional culture is a weakening of our link with the past. The

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<sup>3</sup> T. Friedman, *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2008



impact of Technopolis on this culture, or as psycho-analysts call it ‘the symbolical order’, means a disembedding from the parental order.<sup>4</sup> Modern man faces the challenge of being ‘disinherited’ in the dual sense of losing the heritage of tradition as well as that of his parents. To put it more poignantly, Technopolis entails a ‘bastardization’ of people, in the literal sense of not being encompassed by the parental order. In modernity we can thus discern both an energy that emanates from the vision of the magical control of the world as well as the loss of direction, turning people into ‘bastards’.

This psychological dynamic gives us insight into some of the great political issues of our time. In radical Islam, the world of Technopolis is rejected and people long to return to tradition. It has been noted by authors like Gunnar Heinsohn that this is strongly related to a demographic development in the Islamic world.<sup>5</sup> The population of Islamic countries has grown most rapidly in recent decades, making its population very young. It is the angry young men who are driven to the streets of Cairo, Karachi and Jakarta in search for work, which underpins much of contemporary radical Islam. Their longing for tradition is also a longing for the family order from which they feel disinherited. In earlier decades, Latin America faced this same demographic phenomenon. There the disinherited youth confronted Technopolis by rebelling against global capitalism through revolutions, guerilla warfare and the gang violence of the slums revolting against their bastardization.

Yet this longing for embedding does not only manifest itself in the destructive and violent rebellion against Technopolis. The need for embedding the forces of Technopolis has been present since the dawn of modernity. Focusing our attention on the universal spread of modernity, it seems that this longing has to be left unanswered. Traditions fade away in the world of Technopolis. To the extent that they exist, they are turned into folklore and sterilized in museums, dictionaries of dead languages and local food dishes. Now although this is the most visible way in which we can see the fate of tradition in modernity, it is far from the whole story. This fundamental human need for embedding has actually continuously balanced the stance of detachment inherent in Technopolis. In different forms, Technopolis has been bonded with local forces of embedding, but to see this dynamic, we have to look for it in different places.

We are not confronted with an either-or between an embrace of Technopolis or a retreat into a local form of embedding, but with a task of fusing these forms of embedding symbiotically with Technopolis. Although Technopolis has a tendency to relegate culture to the status of folklore, the influence of local culture has not been undermined in modernity. Elements of such local culture permeate the core structures of modernity, like the capitalist economy and democratic politics. This way, the centrifugal forces of Technopolis have been balanced by a meaningful horizon, which can provide direction in modernity. Moreover, this form of

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<sup>4</sup> For J. Lacan the symbolical order is the order of the father, which is thus at stake in modernity.

<sup>5</sup> G. Heinsohn, *Söhne und Weltmacht. Terror im Aufstieg und Fall der Nationen*, Bern: Orell Füssli Verlag AG, 2003

embedding, by providing direction and meaning, can even contribute to the strength and vitality of the structures of modern life. For instance, if we look at the competitive strength of German industry, we find that it is to an extent based on a pre-modern work ethic as well as practices of cooperation between educational institutions, business and government that go back centuries. Or turning to politics, the strength of modern democracies is connected with the patterns of civil society that are rooted in local traditions. This explains the greater vitality of democracy in Northern Italy compared to the South, which have traditions of decentralized city-states and autocratic empires respectively.

The need for embedding persists in modernity and hence so does the influence of local traditions. By providing meaning and direction, these traditions shape modernity, leading to what S.N. Eisenstadt has called 'multiple modernities'.<sup>6</sup> This way, our contemporary world is also characterized by a different way of relating to world and self than that of Technopolis. Rather than being detached from our surroundings, forms of embedding are characterized by a way of relating of *attunement* to the meaningful patterns in those surroundings. Next to the world as Technopolis, this is a mode of relating we can describe as the world as a *dwelling*. By embedding people, it makes the world 'homely' rather than the totality of objects at our disposal, which is how the world exists in Technopolis.

But how does this relate to what we said before about the vindication of Modernization Theory? We noted that authors like Francis Fukuyama were right in stating that modernity has undermined much of the traditional world and that modernity's reach is universal. In what way then can we still speak of the persistence of local cultures?

To a great extent much of the traditional world has been undermined in modernity. The elements that relied on a stable rural population, that promoted a belief in the hereditary rights of certain families or that were linked to chivalrous warfare are undermined by the forces of modernity. By changing the context in which a traditional culture operated and by undermining much of its 'material' basis, modernity unsettles such a culture. But instead of vanishing into irrelevance, the human need for embedding can respond with creative acts of *transformation* of culture. Through this dynamic, local forms of embedding are reconstituted within the modern world. We can elucidate this dynamic through the concept of an ethos. In a pre-modern form of embedding, people are accustomed to doing a certain type of activity which is inwardly connected to a certain ethos, or way of doing it. In modernity, the activity may become less relevant or even cease to exist, but the ethos can still permeate and vitalize specifically modern forms of activity. For instance, a focus on great craftsmanship may exist as an ethos within the work of guilds. In modernity, guilds have ceased to exist, but the ethos of craftsmanship may then permeate modern industrial work.

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<sup>6</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, *Multiple Modernities*, in: Daedalus, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 1-29 For a more elaborate version of his argument see S.N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations & Multiple Modernities*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, 2 Volumes

Such a task, of bonding local forms of embedding with the structures of modernity is what confronts contemporary developing countries. Most notably, China has embarked on a radical embrace of Technopolis. For about a century now, the country has been experimenting with the way it should incorporate modernity. The fall of the last imperial dynasty, the Qing in 1911, led to a republican form of government. After the Second World War, it embraced a much more radical form of Technopolis in the form of communism. The country was hostile towards its traditional culture, which the government regarded as backward, culminating in the Cultural Revolution which sought to do away with traditional culture altogether. After Mao's death China again reinvented itself, this time through the implementation of capitalist economics. The technopolitical character of this change of direction (relating to the world in a detached manner as objects at our disposal) is exemplified by Deng Xiaoping's famous statement "to get rich is glorious". Since then, the country has created tremendous wealth at unprecedented scale. But this history of experimenting with and embracing of Technopolis does also raise the issue of embedding the population's material success. More and more, the question of China's identity, or its cultural spirit, is coming to the fore. To get rich may be glorious, but it does not satisfy other fundamental human needs. The regime is also becoming more aware of this and has started to re-appropriate the country's Confucian legacy. One of president Hu Jintao's core concepts has been the creation of a "harmonious society", which is an explicit reference to the concept of harmony in Confucianism. The theatrics of the 1008 Olympics as well as the unveiling of a statue of Confucius on the Tainenmen Square next to Mao's, also attest to this different orientation. It is not clear what shape this will have and how it can be rhymed with the communist party's past ideology, but it is clear that an issue of embedding is at stake here.

This task, the task of *embedding Technopolis*, is not a one-time affair, through which a society finds a form in which it bonds its embedding with modernity, after which it can indefinitely reap the fruits of this symbiosis. The tension between the two forces is dynamic and the symbiosis can in time be undermined. Changes, specifically coming from the side of Technopolis in the form of new technologies and different forms of social organization can make an earlier symbiosis inadequate and will require a new act of transformation.

Understanding the dynamic of Embedding Technopolis is the core of this investigation. It follows from an interest in the way that the forces of modernity relate to man's cultural embedding. It is a question that for me also has a personal background. My life has been both over-determined as well as underdetermined by traditional culture, being raised between cultures. I have circled around three cultures as a child. Each provided its own directionality and form, but none of them dominated so as to provide an ultimate shape to my upbringing. The physical migration of my parents from Pakistan and Suriname to the Netherlands has made the question of inner migration of central importance to their children. Having family on two distant parts of the globe turned the house in the Netherlands that I was brought up in a crossroads of influences. Appropriating aspects of these different influences and balancing them has been a central theme in my upbringing and this has implanted in me a great respect

for the way my parents have woven them into a whole. As a theatre on which diverse characters appeared, the influence of our geographically distant heritage was at times greater in our house, whereas at other times we were told by them that we had become more Dutch. From close by, we attuned to these different influences, while none ever became absolute.

The complexity of the identity of my parents' countries of origin has also made an all-too-easy identification with them as a youth problematic. Suriname, the country where my mother was born and raised is a country in South America that consists of a population originating for the greater part from Asia's three largest countries (China, India and Indonesia) and a fourth group originating from Africa. Geographically close to the Caribbean, the country has forged a unique mix of these influences that is not easily grasped. Suriname being a former colony of the Netherlands, also always colored my relation to it in diverse ways. On my father's side, Pakistan is a young country that since its creation in 1947 has been struggling with the question of what constitutes it as a country. Created as a safe haven for Muslims in South Asia (while an equal number of Muslims reside safely in India), it still has to find its way between the different visions of the secular Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the mystical poet Mohammed Iqbal and a rising Islamic radicalism propagated by Abul Ala Maududi.

The Netherlands, where I was raised, is a country of which maybe one of its strongest typical features is that no one believes that it has typical features, which is part of the country's "stubborn localism". These influences have made me particularly attentive to the complexity of dealing with one's heritage and specifically the creative acts of appropriation this requires. Furthermore, it stimulated my interest in the question how a background relates to the ever restless world of modernity. What is it that determines that a cultural background can both be an obstacle as well as an advantage to human flourishing in the modern world? Walking and inhabiting the ground between these traditions has partly put them under my skin, but also kept them at a distance. Hopefully, this has given me a certain attentiveness to what goes on behind the appearance of cultural practices.

Seeking to make sense of it all and looking for orientation, I was drawn to the study of philosophy. Like many children of immigrants, I was attracted by Enlightenment thought, as a way to intellectually secure my passage into modernity, but in the course of my study I was more and more drawn into the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, that great destroyer of worlds. The march through and skeptical unmasking of all world views, but especially the promise of individual creativity held great sway over me. I was driven to philosophically make sense, value, and shape the contingency of life.

In time, I became a student of Ad Verbrugge, with whom we worked through the works of Hegel, Aristotle, Heidegger and Spengler. He has always been skeptical of the power of philosophy and high-flying theories and I admire how in his thought he has never departed from the direct experience of life. Rather than seeking to overcome the rootedness of life and conquer it, I learned to philosophize in the midst of it. At the presentation of his book *Tijd van Onbehagen*, Ad Verbrugge wrote in my edition that I too had the task of thinking through

culture in my own way. After that event I had not given this remark much more thought. But now, at the conclusion of this investigation, it seems that I have done precisely that.

### *The Research Question*

The previous sketch provides the background and an initial overview of this investigation. But before we can proceed to unfold the argument, we need to formulate the core question this investigation seeks to address and discuss the central concepts, scope and method of this study as well as give an outline of how it will proceed. The lines we have sketched above draw from an interest in the way modernity interacts with local traditions. Some have argued that modernity is bringing people closer together in a global culture, making location and tradition less relevant. Recently, Thomas Friedman for instance argues this in his book *The World is Flat*. It connects with Marshall McLuhan's idea of the global village. On the other hand, people like Samuel Huntington have argued that differences in culture will actually become more prominent and be the core fault line of the future. What we want to understand in the course of this investigation is what role culture plays in our contemporary world.

The central question I wish to investigate in this research is this: *How do the universal forces of modernization relate to the diversity in human culture that derives from local traditions, and what implications does this relationship have for the human condition?*

Modernization of course is a very broad concept and has been defined and analyzed in very different ways. It is a an "essentially contested concept" used in different fields from political science to philosophy and architecture and even within these fields there are a wide variety of approaches. This raises the question on how to delineate the concept in a way that it can fruitfully be analyzed. In this investigation we will stay close to the use of the concept in a specific field of social science. We will mark off the concept of modernization by tying into a debate that recently became more prominent through the work of Francis Fukuyama. In his article of 1989 and the subsequent book in 1991 *The End of History and the Last Man*, Fukuyama defends the argument made by the earlier research program of Modernization Theory of which Walt W. Rostow, Daniel Lerner, Gabriel A. Almond and Talcott Parsons were some of the most prominent authors.<sup>7</sup> From different angles, focusing on economic

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<sup>7</sup> Some important books in this field are: W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth – A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society – Modernizing the Middle East*, New York: The Free Press, 1966, G.A. Almond et al, *Comparative Politics Today*, New York: Pearson, 2008, T. Parsons, *The Social System*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2001, A. Inkeles, *Becoming Modern: Individual change in six developing countries*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999

changes, political development and social structure, these authors argued that there was something of a ‘total package’ of modernization that interlocks in these different fields, creating a universal directionality. It is from this school of thought that we will draw our understanding of modernization. From the collapse of global communism, Fukuyama argued for the universal victory of capitalist economics and democratic politics. Stemming from these authors and this line of reasoning, I believe it to be relevant to still speak of modernization, the arguments of others notwithstanding that we are living in a postmodern world. Although I believe there is great merit to this type of reasoning, it is for the most based on a different concept of modernization than the one we use here. It can for instance be argued that there has come an end to grand narratives, but if we define modernization in terms of the spreading of capitalism and democracy, the world is now, (as I will argue more extensively) only becoming more modern and there are no clear signs we are moving beyond it. Certain authors in the field of postmodernism however argue that capitalism itself has changed and became postmodern. I believe that they have tied capitalism too much to industrialization or have otherwise defined it too narrowly. There is of course much more to be said about the concept of postmodernity, but this moves beyond the reach of this investigation. Furthermore, what is still the most pressing issue in the developing world today is the process of modernization with all its dynamics and aspirations of industrialization, liberalization and urbanization. Tying in with the concept of modernization as it is used in Modernization Theory, provides us with the relevant phenomena we need to analyze and provides a wealth of research that will be an important empirical underpinning of our investigation. After having described this empirical field however, we will next move on to a philosophical interpretation of the process of modernization. This will involve an analysis of how this process impacts the human condition. We will argue that it implies a change in the way of relating to world and self. This new way of relating entails a vision that we will characterize as Technopolis.<sup>8</sup>

In our research question, we referred to the other pole of our investigation as “the diversity in human culture that derives from local traditions”. We will define culture here as “the relatively durable man-made structures of meaning that inform behavior and thought”. This means that it excludes ideas, perceptions or isolated actions of individuals, as these lack relative durability. If they leave no trace that over a period of time informs the lives of others, it is not part of the concept of culture as we define it here. Objects of the natural world are durable and can strongly inform the behavior as well as the inner life of people. The sun and the moon, the river Ganges and mount Olympus are all objects that have been meaningful to many people. The objects themselves however, fall outside the field of culture as they are not man-made. Their interpretation, in for example the myths surrounding these objects, are man-made and belong to the field of culture. Speaking of events, the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins stated “an event becomes such as it is interpreted. Only as it is appropriated in and

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<sup>8</sup> We will speak in the following of Technopolis, but it has to be noted that the term must not be reified. It represents a totality of *tendencies* that we can discern in a range of phenomena. These phenomena are highly diverse, but as we will argue a certain way of relating can be identified in them.

through a cultural scheme does it acquire historical significance”<sup>9</sup>. Finally, it follows from our definition that something is culture if it has meaning and informs the lives of people. A temple may be a meaningful man-made structure, but a certain part of its construction, may not. A costume can have strong symbolical meaning, but a certain everyday piece of clothing may not. This is far from saying that we will only focus on ‘high culture’ at the expense of low and everyday culture. It is just to argue that the type of culture we are interested in here has to be meaningful to individuals.

In our research question we have specified culture by focusing on culture that derives from local traditions. Many researchers in the field speaks of ‘culture’ without our qualification while actually referring only to these older forms of culture. This is for instance the case with Lawrence Harrison and Samuel Huntington’s book *Culture Matters*, to which we will turn in the course of our investigation.<sup>10</sup> The culture their book refers to consists of traditional religious and ethical influences. Yet the concept of culture in itself can be understood to have a much wider meaning. It is for instance very well possible to speak of ‘the culture of modernity’, yet this is not what these authors seek to investigate. To avoid this confusion, we will qualify the dynamic of culture in modernity we will analyze here as that culture that derives from local traditions. There are modern forms of culture that can also provide some form of meaningful embedding to people. Internet communities or pressure groups are examples of this. This type of culture is not the object of our investigation. It will focus on culture that embeds people from sources that are not modern (in the sense of how we will describe what modernization consists of), but traditional. We can elaborate on this distinction by looking at the different types of social action that the sociologist Max Weber has distinguished. Traditional social action is that type of action that is determined by “ingrained habituation”.<sup>11</sup> We can contrast it with instrumentally rational social action, which involves a connection of means to rationally calculated ends. It is the latter type of action that has grown in relevance in modernity. This type of action is involved when we for instance speak of ‘the culture of the market’. The market is a relative durable man-made structure that informs human behavior, but the instrumental rationality of this type of action has to be distinguished from the action deriving from culture in the sense that we want to investigate it here. Although it may not be very hard to distinguish instrumentally rational action from traditional action, it is very hard to define what tradition is. There is no way to determine what length of time or how many ‘iterations’ have to happen before we call something tradition. What we do need to keep in mind is the danger of reifying tradition. Tradition is not something static and unchanging. Often when it is invoked as such, there is reason to be skeptical about it. Elites during the heyday of European nationalism in the nineteenth century, but also contemporary

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<sup>9</sup> Quoted from J. Lear, *Radical Hope : Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, p. 9

<sup>10</sup> L. E. Harrison & S.P. Huntington, *Culture Matters : How Values Shape Human Progress*, New York: Basic Books, 2000

<sup>11</sup> M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, p. 25

leaders who wish to bestow more legitimacy on their rule participate in what Eric Hobsbawm has called “the invention of tradition”.<sup>12</sup> What we will actually argue in the course of this investigation is that the more a tradition is invoked consciously as something static, the less it truly exists as a tradition. A tradition lives not in a museum or a document, but in (modifying a phrase of Michael Polanyi) ‘the tactile dimension’. We will come back to this later, but it is now important to emphasize that we do not understand traditions here as static pseudo-Platonic essences in the way that many conservatives, nationalists or Orientalist authors do. Traditions develop and change through common experiences, circumstances, their interpretation and reinterpretation. It is the condition of enunciation that ensures in Homi K. Bhabha’s words that “the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew”<sup>13</sup>. But, we will show that it is a mistake to infer from the necessary act of appropriation and interpretation that all traditions can in a Foucaultian sense be reduced to merely power tactics. What we do need to keep in mind here is that traditions are not fixed entities.

Moreover, it will explicitly be one of our core arguments, when we look at local traditions in their interaction with modernity, that a process of *transformation* is involved. It is the translation of a tradition to the plain of modernity that constitutes an embedding of modernity.

### *The Course of the Investigation and its Method*

In order to answer our question, the investigation needs to proceed in two phases. First, we need to see in specific cases how these two poles, the pole of modernity and that of local traditions, interact with each other. From these cases, we can next turn to the philosophical analysis of what this interaction implies for the human condition. Our investigation is then divided into two parts, the first primarily empirical and the second more philosophical. The first part will consist of chapters I through III and the second part of chapters IV and V.

The first three chapters thus form the empirical underpinning of our investigation. If we want to understand how local traditions relate to universal modernization, we first need to analyze the process of modernization. Is there indeed something like a universal process of modernization? Is there validity to the claim that modernization unfolds universally? And if so, in what dimensions and fields does it operate? Is it only or primarily present in the sphere of economics or is there also such a thing as political modernization? Samuel Huntington has for instance argued that in the field of economics there is a universal development, but in the field of politics, democracy is not a universal outcome, but instead a specifically Western

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<sup>12</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition*

<sup>13</sup> H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 2008, p. 55



regime. In the political field we can then not expect to find a process of global convergence. In *chapter I* we will investigate the universality of modernization. To focus our investigation, we will tie in with the way that modernization has been described within the social-scientific research project of Modernization Theory. In four fields, we will look at whether there is a universal pattern: economics, socio-demographics, state institutions and political regime. We will argue that in all these fields there is a universal pattern to be discerned, vindicating the way that Francis Fukuyama took up the project of Modernization Theory. One specific thread will be worked out throughout this chapter. We will look at what the determinants are of the universal development. In other words, if modernization spreads across these different fields, how do they relate to each other? Do they mutually reinforce each other? If so, can we then speak of something of a ‘total package’ of modernization? We will seek to review the relevant literature in the field. Moreover, we will confront our argument with arguments and evidence that dispute the idea of a universal modernization. This will involve the arguments of authors like Samuel Huntington. It will also involve looking at cases where there is modernization in one field, like strong economic growth, but not in others, like democratization, contradicting our argument of a total package of modernization. This is the case in many countries of the Middle East and we will seek to explain this phenomenon. For the evidence that is quantifiable, we will turn to the databases of large research institutes like the World Bank, the IMF and Freedom House. On this and other data, we will perform quantitative analysis to discern correlations. For readers familiar with the social-scientific literature, this chapter will not hold many surprises, but it will provide the background for our further investigation.

Once we have established that there is such a thing as a total package of modernization that spreads universally, we will in *chapter II* turn to other pole, of local traditions and how they relate to modernization. To the extent that local traditions run counter to the directionality inherent in modernization, they are undermined. In this sense, much of traditional culture is marginalized, or turned into folklore. However, we will argue here that this is not the whole story. By looking at several cases, we will discern how certain parts of modernity are shaped by local traditions. Moreover, we will argue that this animation by something pre-modern is often an important source of vitality and flexibility of the structures of modernity. Through these cases, we will argue that something of a symbiosis between modernity and local traditions is possible. This way modernity is shaped differently, yielding what S.N. Eisenstadt has called “multiple modernities”. How must we understand such a symbiosis against the background of our argument that societies are universally driven into a certain direction by the process of modernization? Much of the material base and context of traditional societies indeed disappears. But, without this outward context of a culture, its inner traits may persist. For instance, an ethos that was linked to a certain activity may survive the demise of that activity. And it is not just the persistence of a tradition that is at stake here, but its transformation. In the cases we will look at, we will see how local traditions are transformed by being transposed to the plain of modernity. The first case we will look at is the so-called ‘developmental state’, a type of state that initiates and drives economic growth and which is found mostly in East Asia. We will argue that it draws strength from pre-modern state traditions by contrasting East Asian countries with other countries that lack such traditions,

and have also tried to create a developmental state, but failed. In terms of industrial structure, we will see that its features are determined by past policy paths and traditions. Turning from economics to politics, we will also in this chapter look at the strength of democratic regimes. We will argue that the difference between the vitality of democracy in North and South Italy, as well as the strength of India's democracy, despite being a largely poor country, can be traced back to pre-modern traditions. In seeking to explain these phenomena and to strengthen our argument, we will confront it with alternative theories. When looking at the origins of the developmental state in East Asia, we will for instance look at the alternative theory of 'late development' argued for by Alexander Gerschenkron and Alice Amsden.<sup>14</sup>

In *chapter III* we will continue to look at cases of the symbiotic relationship between modernization and local traditions and seek to deepen our understanding of it by analyzing it with specific concepts. In this chapter we will focus on five core countries of the West that in the past have played an important role in the development of modernity and/or are still dominant countries in the global system: the United States, England, the Netherlands, France and Germany. Focusing on these countries serves several purposes. First of all, it is relevant for understanding the dynamic of modernization to look at several Western countries more extensively, because modernization is often conflated with Westernization. By focusing on the West, we can disentangle it from modernization. Secondly, people tend to speak of the West as a bloc that has a singular model or specific general characteristics. Especially in the context of the contemporary Asiaphilia, the detailed studies of Asian countries often goes together with a rather brief sketch of how they differ from the block of 'the West' that lacks certain cultural features. Such a view is shortsighted. We will argue that there are much differences between Western countries that go back to the way modernity has been fused with local traditions in them. A final reason to focus on the West is that as modernity originated there, these countries have the longest record of dealing with it. From the conclusions of chapter II, it might be argued that although the East Asian state and Indian democracy draw on traditional sources, this could still be only a transitory phenomenon, after which the last elements of tradition are cast away in subsequent modernization. By looking at countries with several centuries of experience with this dynamic, we can evaluate this suggestion. We will argue in this chapter that throughout modern Western history, we can discern specific local traditions that shape modernization, which gives credence to the thesis that such fusions are not just transitory phenomena, but enduring parts of the modern world. In this chapter, we will also seek to develop the concepts through which we can better understand these phenomena. We will focus on the importance of institutions as well as a specific ethos in shaping patterns of behavior. Throughout different spheres of society we will see recurring patterns, which we will call 'structural resemblances' and from which we can discern a certain 'style'. In understanding how such patterns are reproduced and transmitted unconsciously, we will use the concept of 'cultural ideals' or 'characters'.

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<sup>14</sup> A. Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962; A.H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992

Whereas in Chapter I we start our investigation with a strong focus on quantitative data, in the course of our empirical investigation the emphasis will shift more towards the analysis of institutions, local practices and historical paths that societies embark upon. As such, our study up to this point can be understood in the tradition of economic and political thought of the Historical School, the tradition of authors like Max Weber and which can be traced to the work of G.W.F. Hegel and F. List. We will see how this approach can shed light on phenomena that the prevailing quantitative approach to economics, that does not take heed of such contexts, is unable to do.

From this more empirical investigation, we will turn to the more philosophical part of our research. In chapters IV and V, we will seek to understand the phenomena of the first three chapters in terms of what they tell us about the human condition. What are the implications for a philosophical anthropology that we can discern in our contemporary world both a universal process of modernization as well as the persistence of local traditions? And how do these two come together in a symbiotic relationship?

*Chapter IV* will be concerned with the question how these two poles can be philosophically interpreted. In the first part of the chapter we will describe the unity of the different dimensions of modernization. We will argue that in terms of the human condition, modernity spreads a specific way of relating to world and self that can be characterized as detachment or disembedding. The vision connected with this way of relating is the transformation of the world into what we call Technopolis. Other elements of this vision include the neutralization of the world, the subject as the source of value and the permanent reorganization of the world according to human desires.

We will then describe how the world of Technopolis also threatens to spread meaninglessness and lack of direction. It is a development the logic of which can also be discerned in the development of modern philosophy. We will then turn to describing the alternative way of relating that pertains to local traditions. Instead of detachment, the way of relating here can be characterized as ‘attunement’. The world as Technopolis will be contrasted with the world as Dwelling or Embeddedness. The condition of embeddedness will be elaborated through concepts like *mētis*, tactility and being-in-form.

In this chapter we will draw more on philosophical literature. Two important philosophical inspirations are Oswald Spengler and Peter Sloterdijk. Spengler is not much read anymore due to his alleged pessimism and rigid theory of history. However, he is the philosopher who most elaborately and thoroughly put culture in the center of an understanding of man. His analysis of local traditions, but also concepts, like that of tact ( in his words *kosmische Takt*) and consonance (*Einklang*) are important sources for this investigation. Understanding modernity as Technopolis draws much on Peter Sloterdijk’s concept of the Crystal Palace. Furthermore, for our analysis of embeddedness we draw on the anthropology he developed in his trilogy *Sphären*. Apart from this turn to a critical analysis of philosophical texts, methodologically we will also turn towards a more phenomenological approach. Chapters I through III dealt with phenomena from a social-scientific approach. Turning now to how for

instance market forces or demographic change affect the human condition, we need to phenomenologically reinterpret these developments.

After we have elaborated on these implications for the human condition of both modernization and local tradition, we will in *chapter V* turn to their interaction, or ‘symbiosis’. How do the two relate to each other in the contemporary world if we look at their bearing on human existence? We will return to phenomena we described in chapters II and III, in which we saw that modernity and tradition were fused. How do the two ways of relating come together in specific phenomena? What happens when these two forces collide? We will investigate this by way of ‘psycho-politics’. What we mean with this is that we will look at large-scale societal phenomena where modernity and traditional culture collide and seek to understand them by way of psychological experiences, motives and responses. We will define the basic experience of modernity as that of an overwhelming external force that renders one’s traditional embedding problematic. From this experience, several responses can follow. If modernity and tradition are not bonded symbiotically in the response, we call this a deformation. This is the case when the external challenge is met with denial, identification or conquest. From a view of the psychological dynamics of these responses we will shed light on the motives and effects of large-scale phenomena like certain forms of conservatism, the situation of American Indians, communism, the financial frenzy of recent time as well as forms of nationalism and radical Islam. All of these phenomena are deeply characterized by what we call bastardization. If modernity and tradition are however bonded symbiotically, we will call this a “transformation” and in this chapter we will look at how this comes about and through what channels it develops. With this we can elucidate the phenomena of the second and third chapter in their bearing on the human condition. We will end the investigation by venturing into the future. What are the prospects of this process of Embedding Technopolis? More specifically, if we see new countries now entering the technopolitical world, what could a transformation of these countries look like?

In the course of the whole investigation we will move from the most visible manifestations towards the deeper-laying springs of human action. The most obvious uniformity of the modern world at the beginning will give way to a complex diversity of inner sources. Tradition may reside in the places where we least expect it, where it creates an Embedding of Technopolis.

## **Chapter I: The Universal Process of Modernization**

### ***Introduction***

In the course of this investigation, we will look at the way the forces of modernization relate to those of culture deriving from local traditions and what impact this relationship has on the human condition. What we thus need to do first is identify what the forces of modernization and those of local tradition are. This will be done in an empirical analysis in the first three chapters. In this chapter we will look at what constitutes modernization. We will ask whether there is such a thing as a universal directionality inherent in modernization and what this entails. If we want to understand how local traditions interact with modernization, we first need to have a clear idea what modernization is. Indeed, if there is no universal process, it will not be possible to investigate how it relates to local traditions.

As we stated in the introduction, modernization has been interpreted in very diverse ways. We will give focus to the concept by tying in with the way it has been conceptualized by the research project of Modernization Theory. This was a research project in the postwar period that involved a group of authors doing research in different fields. It is a project that was dusted off and powerfully defended by Francis Fukuyama in his argument for the End of History. In order to discern whether there is a directionality inherent in modernization, we will look at the theories proposed in Modernization Theory and assess them from contemporary evidence.

We will look at modernization in four fields. First we will look at directionality in economics. Is there a global tendency in the forms of economic organization? How are societies altered in this process and what does this imply for global order? These questions will be discussed in section A. In section B we will turn to socio-demographics. Here we will look at urbanization, literacy and demographic composition and assess whether we can discern a universal logic of modernization in them. Section C deals with the state and its institutions. Here we will look at the process of state-building. Is there such a thing as the modern state? What role does bureaucratization and a regulatory framework play in this process? In section D we will turn to political regimes. Is there a global directionality towards a certain type of regime? Specifically, does modernization entail democratization? In E, we will draw conclusions from the previous sections. We will argue that we can indeed discern directionality in these different fields. Furthermore, we will look at the way they are related. Do they entail each other? Can they develop separately? What are the variables that cause directionality and how do they operate across these four fields? We will see that there is something like a 'total package' of modernization and that Fukuyama's thesis is correct. In this section we will shortly assess the major critiques of this thesis and show how they are flawed. In section F finally, we will look at the anthropology of Modernization Theory. If there is a global development towards modernization across a wide range of fields, this also implies a transition towards 'modern man'. What characterizes modern man and what are the assumptions on human nature behind this concept? By making these assumptions explicit, we

will also open the way for our line of critique of this anthropology that we will pursue in later chapters. Just as in chapters II and III, where we will argue that there is more to our contemporary world than the universal process of modernization, we will also, in chapters IV and V, argue that the concept of modern man as it is developed in modern theory is also an inadequate anthropology to explain our contemporary world. Specifically, this concept of modern man entails a disembedding, which is characteristic of modernization, but which is balanced by the dynamic of embedding, emanating from local traditions. But before we can develop our critique, we first need to understand to what extent we can indeed speak of universal modernization.

## **A). Modernization in Economics**

It seems that economics is the most obvious field where we can speak of a global directionality or convergence. The goods created by multinational corporations are spread out to all corners of the globe. We can find prominent consumer brands in all but the most secluded communities. What evidence is there that a certain form of economics spreads globally? What is the dynamic behind such a development and what are its consequences for how the world is organized?

We will look at the principles of modernization in economics in three steps. We will first look at the logic of international capitalist markets (1). Here we will see that against the school of Dependencia, evidence indicates that the classical liberal theory of how open capitalist markets create wealth is correct. As this theory is vindicated, we see a global embrace of capitalist markets. As countries embrace open markets, there is a distinct pattern that their economy goes through (2). Through economic modernization countries move through stages from a tradition society towards a mass-consumer society. The global spread of capitalist markets also implies a shift in the relative distribution of power (3). This pattern will be described in the last part of this section.

### **1). capitalism & the role of trade**

The belief that open markets are central to economic growth is one of Modernization Theory's oldest elements and can be traced back to Adam Smith's 1776 book *On the Wealth of Nations*. The core factor that leads to the creation of wealth is the division of labour. By breaking down an activity into simple parts that are done by different people, productivity can be raised tremendously. Adam Smith gave the example of making pins. He argued that one person by himself could scarcely make one in a day. In his day, the process was broken up into distinct activities performed by different people, through which ten people could produce several thousand pins. The scope at which the division of labour is possible is dependent on

the size of the market, which in turn depends on infrastructure, communication and technology in general. Output can be created as efficiently as possible in the situation of a free market. By freely relating demand and supply the so-called 'invisible hand' can do its work. The price mechanism relates supply to demand in the most efficient way, benefitting all participants. Not only on the micro-level, but also between nations, a division of labour leads to the most efficient allocation of resources. Fighting the mercantilist policies of his age, Smith recommended countries to focus on the production of that which they made most efficiently.

The most influential critique of this theory came from the authors of Dependencia theory, a neo-Marxist school of thought.<sup>15</sup> According to this school, the global market is fundamentally exploitive, making it impossible for poorer countries to develop and catch up with rich countries. Poor countries are locked into the sale of raw materials and other low value-added goods, the prices of which tend to fall, whereas they have to buy high value-added (and hence expensive) goods from developed countries. Certain African countries would for instance sell coffee to developed countries and would have to buy computers and automobiles from them. This dynamic puts these countries in a state of dependency and locks them into poverty. In other words, free trade favours rich countries at the expense of poor countries.

The rich countries represent the global 'core' that is distinguished from the exploited 'periphery' and 'semi-periphery'. The only way to escape this logic of dependency, is for peripheral countries to close themselves off from the international market. Rather than import expensive value-added goods, poor countries should strive to produce these goods themselves by subsidizing domestic producers and placing tariffs on foreign imports. This policy has been called Import-Substitution Industrialization (ISI) and was widely used in developing countries throughout the twentieth century, most notably in Latin America from the 1930's to the 1960's.

The intellectual origins of Dependencia theory lie in W.I. Lenin's book *Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. In this work, Lenin sought to explain why the proletarian revolution, proclaimed by Marx, did not come about in capitalist societies. He argues that the proletarian class of these societies were 'bought off' through the exploitation of the rest of the world. This way, the true proletariat came to reside in the poor countries of the world and the required overthrow of capitalism hence had to come from these countries.

The evidence regarding the relationship between developed and developing countries renders the argument that capitalist trade systematically keeps developing countries poor problematic. Contra Lenin's assertion of a global proletariat, there does not seem to be a trend of growing income inequality between the core and the periphery. Since the start of the industrial

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<sup>15</sup> Prominent authors in this field are I. Wallerstein, R. Prebisch, H. Cardoso and G. Frank. In his defense of Modernization theory, Francis Fukuyama similarly criticized Dependencia theory. F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books, 1992, pp. 98-108

revolution, global inequality indeed grew rapidly.<sup>16</sup> Especially the countries of North-Western Europe outpaced the rest of the world in terms of per capita wealth. Starting from the nineteen-fifties, there were several decades in which growth in developed countries was in tandem with growth in developing countries. After the oil crisis of 1973, several developing countries started to stagnate, but overall global inequality started to decline. This drop in global inequality can be attributed to the economic development in Asia. After Japan and the four Asian tigers, China and later India embarked on a path of economic growth that relatively outpaced growth in developed countries. With the populations of the two largest countries in the world growing wealthier, global inequality has declined. Africa and Latin America lagged behind in terms of growth, but in the first decennium of the twenty-first century growth in these two continents also outstripped growth in the developed world.

Through what mechanism are developing countries catching up with developed countries? And specifically, how does it relate to open capitalist trade? Is it a force that locks them into dependency or did it contribute to their development?

Turning first to the economic development of China and India, we see that economic growth went together with an opening of markets and an integration in the global economy. China's economic miracle started after the death of Mao Zedong in 1978, when Deng Xiaoping took control of the country. Deng Xiaoping stated: "Not a single country in the world, no matter what its political system, has ever modernized with a closed-door policy."<sup>17</sup> Under Mao, China sought economic autarky. After Mao, China started to open to global trade, starting with its Special Economic Zones (SEZ's) in Guangdong province close to Hong Kong. After opening to global trade, China transformed itself into one of the most powerful industrial exporters and it maintained an economic growth rate that averaged more than 9.5% over a thirty year period. India's economy started to grow rapidly after the restrictions to international trade were weakened after the crisis of 1991. India was not communist like China, but it have a large socialist state, a course pursued by Jawaharlal Nehru. An elaborate system of restrictions, coined 'the license Raj' hindered open markets. Together with the lifting of these restrictions, India's growth rate started to go up.

We can see the same pattern not just if we look at countries through time, but also if we compare countries regionally. Within South East Asia, Myanmar is the country that has closed itself off the most from the global economy and its GDP per capita is \$233.<sup>18</sup> Vietnam also has a history of economic isolationism, but started to open up in the middle of the eighties with the so-called policy of 'Doi Moi' (meaning 'renovation'). Currently, its GDP per capita stands at \$1047. Thailand and Malaysia both have embraced global trade for decades and have GDP per capita levels of \$4099 and \$7866, respectively.

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<sup>16</sup> A. Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*, Paris: OECD, 2007, p. 22

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in L.W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 4

<sup>18</sup> IMF 2008 data, from website: <http://www.imf.org/external/data.htm> .



North and South Korea were both agricultural societies in 1960 with a similar low level of development. Whereas North Korea chose to close off the country and develop goods through its communist state, South Korea adopted a policy of export-oriented growth. North Korea has an official policy it calls 'juche' which implies economic self-reliance, and has criticized South Korea for becoming dependent on foreigners by opening its economy. But whereas the former country now has chronic shortages of food (for which it has to turn to its neighbours for help), the latter has become a wealthy OECD-country.

The policy of turning away from the global economic system that dependency theory advocates has not led to economic development. Instead countries that vigorously embarked on an export strategy has achieved far greater economic growth. These experiences contradict dependency theory and underpin the dynamic that classical economics described.

The policy recommendations of dependency theory were implemented in several Latin American countries. Whereas Argentina and Brazil did have a period of strong economic growth in the seventies and eighties, their economies came to face severe problems and weakened under the pressure of a heavy and inefficient states system and extensive foreign loans (to finance the internal industrialization) at the same time that East Asian countries took off economically. Characteristic for the failure of dependency theory is the career of Henrique Cardoso. He was a prominent dependency theorist who became president of Brazil in the 1990's. After the problematic years of the eighties, he abandoned his previous theoretical commitments and focused on stabilizing the Brazilian economy along classical economic lines through for instance fiscal discipline and price stability. Following this policy, Brazil recovered from its debt problems and after a lost decade economic growth has gone up, reaching 5% in 2007. Apart from per capita income growth, the country has built up considerable reserves through its export sector, has stable government funding, brought down rampant inflation, and foreign debt as a percentage of GDP is low now. By contrast, Argentina, that continued the populist policies and state intervention of earlier decades under the reign of the both Nestor and Christina Kirchner, leaving it with huge foreign debt, a weak fiscal position of the government, very high inflation and unbalanced economic development.

These cases provide evidence against dependency theory, but there is one part of the theory that deserves more consideration. It has become clear that international trade is beneficial for developing countries and this goes against what dependency theorists argue. The policy that these theorists called for, Import-Substitution Industrialization (ISI), however, has been used by several countries during certain periods and not without success. If we look at the economic growth of East Asia, we see that many of these countries actually followed a policy of ISI in an early phase of their development. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China all kept foreign companies at bay in sectors that they wanted to develop internally. Through fiscal and other incentives, domestic companies were encouraged to develop products in certain targeted sectors. But doesn't this contradict our earlier remarks on the role of open global trade in economic growth?

The crucial difference between the ISI policy of East Asia on the one hand and those advocated by Dependencia theory and implemented by Latin American countries on the other hand, is that in the former cases ISI was implemented for a short period with the goal of creating companies that would focus on exports and compete internationally. By contrast, in the latter case, ISI was focused on closing off the domestic market from the external world. In East Asia, companies were shielded and nurtured to develop electronics and automobiles so that eventually they would be able to compete with international companies. The idea behind this was, in contrast with Dependencia theory, that developing countries should seek to participate in international trade, but that ISI can be helpful in creating strong domestic companies in the early phases of development. This is the argument of 'infant industries', developed by the German economist Friedrich List. Against Adam Smith, he argued that free trade can make it difficult for less developed countries to compete internationally. In order to reach the scale and investments required to become competitive, developing countries should nurture their infant industries until they are capable of competing in the international market.

This type of policy has been followed by many successful developing countries. Outside of East Asia, Germany also applied it at the end of the nineteenth century to compete with Britain. Furthermore, much of List's inspiration came from Alexander Hamilton who argued that the United States should protect its young industry against British trade.

In sum, by looking at the general dynamics of the capitalist system, we have seen that, against Dependency Theory, the classical argument that trade is beneficial to developing countries and decreases global inequality has been substantiated. On the other hand, we have also seen that ISI can stimulate economic growth through the nurture of infant industries before they can compete globally. In this sense, what comes out of the review of the workings of capitalist trade substantiates Adam Smith, but supplements it with Listian arguments.

## **2). The stages of economic growth**

We have established that the universal formula of classical economics, that the division of labour in open markets fosters economic growth, is correct and that globally developing countries are becoming more wealthy because of its implementation. The next question we need to answer is what happens after countries open their markets. Are there certain phases that countries go through in the course of economic modernization? One of the early authors of Modernization Theory developed a model of economic development. Several problems have been identified with the model, especially with a too rigid application of it. Taking this critique into account, we will see that this model still uncovers a universal pattern, or directionality, in economic modernization.

Walt Whitman Rostow developed his model of economic development in his 1960 book *The Stages of Economic Growth*.<sup>19</sup> He distinguishes five stages with specific characteristics that societies go through. The central variable that drives this development through stages is the implementation of modern technology. It is the same variable that in Fukuyama's analysis initiates the process of modernization.

The stages are defined as a secular linear process from (1) traditional society to (2) the preconditions for take-off, to (3) take-off, to (4) the drive to maturity, and finally (5) the age of high mass-consumption.

The first stage is traditional society which is defined as a society in which production and attitudes are based on what Rostow calls 'pre-Newtonian' science and technology. He uses the term Newtonian metaphorically. It does not concern specifically Isaac Newton's theories, but the change to a mindset in which men believe the external world is subject to a few knowable (and mathematical) laws and becomes capable of productive manipulation. The concept of pre-Newtonian is very wide and encompasses Europe's Middle Ages, the Maya civilization as well as ancient China. In the economies of these societies economic change could happen, by raising productivity due to a certain invention or an increase in the level of trade. However, what they all share in contrast with 'Newtonian societies' is that they had a ceiling on the level of attainable output per head. Productivity is limited without modern science, its applications and its frame of mind.

This limitation in traditional societies meant that a large part of the available resources had to go into agriculture with its concomitant hierarchical social structure. Family and clan connections are central in social life and political power tends to be regional, in the hands of those who own the land. Values exhibit what Rostow calls a 'long-run fatalism': although people can strive to make their lives better, they believe that the possibilities for their grandchildren will be roughly the same as those of their grandparents.

In the second stage, the preconditions for take-off are developed. In a few countries this resulted from an internal impetus (Britain, United States, Canada, Australia), but in most countries it came from an external intrusion. This intrusion shook the traditional world, and made the idea of economic progress not only a possibility to be considered, but turned it into a practical necessity, for the sake of national dignity, profit or general welfare. For much of the developing world, this external impetus came through colonialism. Changes that occur in this phase are the rise of an entrepreneurial class of people, the emergence of banks, the mobilization of savings into investments, the widening of the scope of commerce and on a small scale modern manufacturing enterprises come into existence. In many cases, a political transformation also takes place in this stage. A centralized national state emerges and replaces the traditional landed regional interests. In Western Europe, this phase occurred in the late

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<sup>19</sup> W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth : A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990

seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Several African countries that are currently involved in state-building can be placed in this stage.

In the third phase of take-off, the blocks of resistance from traditional society are overcome and the forces of economic development come to dominate society. The implementation of technology steadily rises, but also a political group comes to power that regards economic modernization as a priority. In this phase, the rate in investment and savings increase from a low 5% to at least 10%. New industries emerge, requiring more factory workers and services to support these industries leading to an expansion of urban areas. Not only in industry, but also in agriculture new techniques spread, increasing productivity. The take-off phase is a short interval, according to Rostow, lasting about two decades and happened in Britain after 1783, in France and the U.S. in the forties and fifties of the nineteenth century, in Germany in the third quarter of the nineteenth century and in Japan in the last quarter of that century.

The fourth stage is the longer interval that represents the drive to maturity. Modern technology is used throughout the whole field of economic activity and at least 10-20% of national income is invested. The economy finds its place in the international economic system. Rostow argues that maturity is generally attained some sixty years after take-off begins (and hence forty years after the end of take-off). From the narrow base of the take-off phase, the economy has moved into more refined and technologically complex areas. It is for instance a shift from coal, iron, and heavy railroad engineering towards machine-tools, chemicals and electrical equipment. This was the transition that Britain, the United States, France and Germany went through by the end of the nineteenth century. Maturity is defined as the stage in which an economy shows the capacity to move beyond the industries which powered its take-off and absorb and apply the most advanced fruits of the contemporary modern technology.

After reaching maturity, the economy finally moves into the age of high mass-consumption. The leading sectors shift towards durable consumers' goods and services. In the post-war period, the United States, and subsequently Western Europe and Japan moved into this stage. At the end of the twentieth century the Asian tigers reached this stage. Real income per head rises far beyond the level of providing for basic food, shelter and clothing. In terms of labour, the proportion of people working in offices or skilled factory jobs increases. At this stage, issues like social welfare come to compete with achieving technological and economic growth as an overriding objective. Electric-powered household goods as well as the automobile are paradigmatic for this phase.

There are several important lines of critique of the Rostowian model of five stages that we need to take account of. Simon Kuznets for instance has criticized the Rostowian model on several accounts.<sup>20</sup> According to Kuznets, the theory is too unilinear and rigid. Often, change happens more slowly and incremental, rather than with a dramatic phase of 'take-off'. After the conditions for take-off are in place, there can still be social and economic tensions which

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<sup>20</sup> S. Kuznets, *Economic Growth and Structure*, Portsmouth: Heinemann Publishers, 1965

hinder linear development. Furthermore, there are variables on which societies can differ, which have an impact on the specific path a society takes to economic development. Relevant are distinctions whether a country is an early or a late industrializer, whether it is a large country with a large domestic market or a small country with a small domestic market, or whether it is a resource-rich or resource-poor country. These factors have a different impact on the way a country moves through these stages.

Alexander Gerschenkron also criticized Rostow for neglecting different patterns depending on the timing of a country's modernization.<sup>21</sup> In the course of time, technological changes made the scale of investments necessary for development ever larger. He argues that in the early phases, economic development in England and France was mostly self-financed by firms. When Germany modernized in a later phase, banks and financial institutions that could raise larger investments played a greater part in the process of development. Even later, in Russia, only the government was able to mobilize the massive financial investments needed for industry and infrastructure. This also explains the more 'explosive' nature of development as one goes from west (England) to east (first Germany, then Russia) in Europe. Another factor that creates divergence in development paths is international technology transfer. Latecomers in economic development can take over the know-how from more advanced countries without the financial burden and uncertainty of developing the technology. Due to the 'advantages of backwardness', latecomers can develop faster than those who came before them. In recent decades, this has become abundantly clear from economic development in East Asia. Whereas in Western Europe, economic growth averaged 2% over extended periods of time, several East Asian countries have achieved about 10% annual growth in the course of several decades.

Kuznets and Gerschenkron both make substantial amendments to Rostow's original formulation of the stages of economic development. The duration of the phases can vary between countries, the role of different actors can vary and certain features of a country like its size or resource base, can impact the course of development. In other words, the model as it was developed by Rostow, specifically the exact time frame of the stages, was too rigid. These factors need to be taken into account, but they do not undermine the idea of the stages of economic growth. Applied less rigidly, we can still identify Rostow's five stages of development and their characteristics in modernizing countries. Universally, we see a development from a traditional society towards mass consumer society, in which it moves from agriculture to complex industry and services, and from low savings rates and scarcity to higher savings and investments and the provision of social services.

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<sup>21</sup> A. Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962

### 3). The rise and decline of great powers

In this section up to now, we have established that there is a global convergence in economic principles in favour of open capitalist markets and that once countries open up to international markets they move through specific stages of economic development. On the basis of this, we can draw conclusions for global order. From the spread of capitalism we can discern a dynamic in changes in the global distribution of power and make conjectures on future prospects.

Over the last centuries, this expansion of the group of countries that are economically modern, has gone together with a shift in the relative power of countries. From the dawn of modernity until the first half of the twentieth century, Europe had been the centre of global affairs.

In the seventeenth century, the United Provinces of the Netherlands was the most powerful country in the world, or hegemon, a position which England had taken over in the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> The dominance of European power reached its summit in the age of colonialism, in which a large part of the world came under direct political control of European nations. In the course of the twentieth century, the United States of America became the world's most powerful nation and after several decades of struggle with the Soviet Union, it emerged as the global hegemon at the end of the Cold War. Currently, many authors are describing a shift of power towards Asia. Why have these shifts in power occurred? Can a logic be discerned behind this shift in power? Is it in the nature of the capitalist economic system for leadership within it to change? Here we will look at how we can explain the relative rise and decline in power of countries.

Power in international affairs has throughout history been tied to population size. Economic strength and technological development has also always been important, but this is much more so the case in the modern world. There are many examples of smaller armies defeating far larger opponents, from the colonization of the Americas to the Opium Wars between England and China. The strength of an army has become dependent on its level of technological sophistication and this in turn depends on its economic development. In the first place, a country needs the industrial base to produce the military equipment. Secondly, economic strength is required to sustain more costly warfare. A country's military strength depends not only on the size of its population, but also on its level of economic development. A country with a small population but which is more economically developed has an advantage over a larger less developed country. If the larger country however, catches up economically, it will have the power to displace the former. This implies that in the early modern age, relatively small countries could be dominant, but in the course of time power moves to ever larger countries that have embarked on economic modernization. This explains how power shifts globally and brings into perspective the possibilities of a shift in power.

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<sup>22</sup> C. Chase-Dunn, *Global Formation: Structures of the World-Economy*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998, pp. 179-188

Through this analysis, we can shed light on the above described historical sequence. The seventeenth century, often referred to as the ‘Dutch Golden Age’, was an age in which the country dominated global finance and trade. In terms of population, the United Provinces of the Netherlands was far smaller than other European nations. However, its individual level of wealth was the highest in the world well into the eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup> This way it could overpower its larger rivals. The politician Johan Van Oldenbarneveldt could for instance in a day raise enough money for an army from Dutch capital markets, something that a larger country like France could not do at the time.<sup>24</sup> However, if these competitors would manage to catch up economically, the balance of power would shift in their favour due to their larger size.

In time, both England and France became more powerful than the Netherlands. At the end of the nineteenth century, the global balance of power again shifted as we can see from the next table taken from Paul Kennedy.

Table 1<sup>25</sup>

<b>Total Population of the Powers, 1890 - 1938</b>								
(millions)								
	1890	1900	1910	1913	1920	1928	1938	
1 Russia	116.8	135.6	159.3	175.1	126.6	150.4	180.6	1
2 United States	62.6	75.9	91.9	97.3	105.7	119.1	138.3	2
3 Germany	49.2	56.0	64.5	66.9	42.8	55.4	68.5	4
4 Austria-Hungary	42.6	46.7	50.8	52.1	--	--	--	
5 Japan	39.9	43.8	49.1	51.3	55.9	62.1	72.2	3
6 France	38.3	38.9	39.5	39.7	39.0	41.0	41.9	7
7 Britain	37.4	41.1	44.9	45.6	44.4	45.7	47.6	5
8 Italy	30.0	32.2	34.4	35.1	37.7	40.3	43.8	6

Table 1 shows the size of the populations of eight countries from 1890 to 1938. Throughout the whole period, Russia had the largest population of this group. In 1938, it was followed by the United States and much further behind were Japan, Germany, Britain, Italy and France respectively. Population thus gave Russia great power potential, but in order to get a better estimation of their power, the level of economic development has to be taken into account.

<sup>23</sup> This is greatly documented in J.I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995

<sup>24</sup> C. Chase-Dunn, *idem*, p. 174

<sup>25</sup> P. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, London: Fontana Press, 1989, p. 255

<b>Per Capita Levels of Industrialization 1880 - 1938</b>						
	<i>1880</i>	<i>1900</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>1938</i>	
1 Great Britain	87	[100]	115	122	157	2
2 United States	38	69	126	182	167	1
3 France	28	39	59	82	73	4
4 Germany	25	52	85	1128	144	3
5 Italy	12	17	26	44	61	5
6 Austria	15	23	32	--	--	
7 Russia	10	15	20	20	38	7
8 Japan	9	12	20	30	51	6

Table 2 presents a ranking of these countries in terms of per capita industrialization in the period 1880-1938. Whereas Britain was on top at the beginning of this period, the United States surpassed it in the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1938, Germany, France and Italy come in at third, fourth and fifth place respectively. Japan that had the third largest population in this table falls down to the sixth place and Russia, that had the largest population ranked lowest in terms of per capita level of industrialization.

In order to assess of the distribution of power between these countries, we need to combine these two factors. The total economic clout of a country, which is the basis of its power, can be calculated by multiplying population size with per capita levels of development which yields table 3.

<b>Total Industrial Potential of the Powers</b>					
	<i>1880</i>	<i>1900</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>1938</i>
Britain	73.3	[100]	127.2	135	181
United States	46.9	127.8	298.1	533	528
Germany	27.4	71.2	137.7	158	214
France	25.1	36.8	57.3	82	74
Russia	24.5	47.5	76.6	72	152
Austria - Hungary	14	25.6	40.7	--	--
Italy	8.1	13.6	22.5	37	46
Japan	7.6	13	25.1	45	88

With the second largest population and the highest per capita industrialization, the U.S. was by far the biggest industrial power in 1938, almost two-and-a-half times as large as the second country, Germany. Britain comes in third, then followed by Russia, where the low level of industrialization is compensated by its huge population. Italy ranked low both in population size as well as level of industrialization, making its total industrial strength less than ten times as small as the United States. Through these data points, good estimates can be made of the relative distribution of power in the world. Kennedy argues that these figures show why Germany and Japan could not have won the Second World War from the United States.



So what do these statistics look like in our time? Before we proceed to answer that question, a qualifying remark has to be made. We are arguing here that economic strength is the central explanatory factor in the global distribution of power. To have a large economic base is absolutely required to be a great power in the modern age, more so if the position of power is to be sustained over longer periods of time. But we are not arguing that it is the only factor that determines power. One other factor is a belligerent stance from which a willingness to make great sacrifices can emerge. The Soviet Union for instance was willing to divert a much larger share of its national income to defence in order to keep up with the United States and the same holds for North Korea currently. Another factor is the control of a strategic asset. Saudi Arabia has the world's largest proven oil reserves and is the largest producer, a position that Russia holds in natural gas. This gives these countries greater leverage over others. A range of factors determines a country's power vis-à-vis others, but in the modern world economic strength is the central underlying factor of power.

Now we can turn back to our current situation and assess the prospects for the future distribution of power. At the beginning of the twentieth century the United States emerged as the most powerful country. We saw that since the first decade of that century, it had the highest income per capita. Combined with its huge population, this resulted in its status as the global superpower. What has changed over the last decades? What competitors have emerged and what kind of prospects exist for the replacement of the U.S. as the dominant power?

After the Second World War, Japan quickly embarked on a path of economic growth, exhibiting at that time unparalleled growth over a period of several decades. The country's economy came to a dramatic standstill in 1990, faced deflationary forces and has not returned to the growth levels of before its crisis ever since. However, throughout the 1980's, there was widespread fear in the U.S. that Japan would become a more powerful economy than the U.S. Many books appeared at the time on Japanese business practices and how they should be adopted by the West. Strategist Edward N. Luttwak described the rise of Japan as a threat to America's position.<sup>26</sup> Japanese authors also became more assertive of the distinctiveness and power of their nation. Akio Morita and Shintaro Ishihara wrote the essay *The Japan that can say No*, arguing that Japan should stand up to the U.S. and chart its own course. This title inspired other authors in 1997 to write *The China that can say No*. Indeed, China is today often viewed in the same way as was Japan in the 1980's. Japan did not reach the expectation of becoming the new global superpower. How does this relate to China's current situation?

Turning to our conceptualization of the basis of power as the combination of population size with per capita income, it becomes clear that it was implausible for Japan to replace the U.S. as the world's dominant power. Japan's population is two and a half times as small as that of the U.S. (127 million versus 315 million). This means that for it to equal the total economic clout of the U.S., it would have to have a per capita income more than two and a half times as

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<sup>26</sup> E.N. Luttwak, *The Endangered American Dream: How to Stop the United States from becoming a Third-World Country and How to win the Geo-Economic Struggle for Industrial Supremacy*, New York: Touchstone, 1993

high as that of the most advanced countries in the world and it is not clear how this would be possible. That such a scenario seemed more plausible in the 1980's has much to do with the dynamic of financial markets. Changes in the value of the yen and the tremendous inflow of capital in the Tokyo Stock Exchange as well as the Japanese real estate market inflated the value of Japan's economy. In 1990 the Tokyo Stock Exchange represented 60% of the total global market capitalization. At that time it was a common assertion in Japan that the ground underneath the Imperial Palace in Tokyo was worth more than all the land in the state of California. Emblematic of this financial prowess was also Mitsubishi's acquisition of the Rockefeller Center which led to a wave of anti-Japanese sentiment in the U.S.

The origins of these developments in financial markets are complex, but from the way we defined power it is clear that it was unlikely for Japan to overtake the U.S. Currently, its economy is about two and a half times as small as that of the U.S., which is about the potential it can reach judging from the size of its population. After Japan, the so-called Asian tigers embarked on a similar path of long-term high growth. To an even greater extent than Japan, the potential of these countries to change the balance of power is limited. Apart from the city-states Singapore and Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan have populations of 48 million and 23 million respectively. Even when these countries reach the per capita income level of the world's developed countries, they will not fundamentally challenge the global power balance. So what are the prospects for a future change in the balance of power?

**Total Population Prospects United Nations 2009 in millions  
& GDP per capita in US\$ (IMF) & total GDP in million \$**

		<i>Population</i>	<i>GDP per Capita</i>	<i>Total GDP</i>
1	China	1346	3315	4401
2	India	1198	1016	1209
3	USA	315	46859	14262
4	Indonesia	230	2246	511
5	Brazil	194	8197	1572
6	Pakistan	181	1044	167
7	Bangladesh	162	506	81
8	Nigeria	155	1451	214
9	Russia	141	11807	1676
10	Japan	127	38559	4923

The first column in table 4 exhibits the largest countries in terms of population. It becomes clear that China's case is different from that of other East Asian countries. Its potential, defined as the size of its population, is far larger than that of the U.S. and the same holds for India. It also becomes clear from the table that at current population levels, barring the

collapse or merger of large countries, these are the only two countries that can challenge the position of the U.S. To get a better understanding of the contemporary situation, we need to look at the per capita income levels of these countries in the second column. China's GDP per capita is still 13 times as small as that of the U.S. and India more than 40 times as small. This implies that these countries have only fulfilled their potential to a very limited extent. This can be seen if we look at the third column which exhibits total GDP of the countries. Even though China's population is four times as large as that of the U.S., its total GDP is less than a third of that of the U.S. India's economy is less a tenth of that of the U.S. And even though Japan's population is ten times smaller than that of China, its total GDP in 2009 is still larger.<sup>27</sup> From the table we can see that currently the U.S. is still the uncontested economic and industrial global power. It has more than double the size of number two, Japan. China overtook Germany as the third global economy in 2007, but is still far behind the U.S. Nevertheless, the gigantic populations of China and India give it the potential to eventually overtake the U.S. The history of the modern capitalist system has been the history of power shifting to newly emerging countries with populations larger than those of the dominant powers.

We can discern a shift in hegemony from the United Provinces of the Netherlands to England and then to the United States. Currently, only China and India hold the potential to become the world's largest economies. But this is not to say that they will necessarily fulfil this potential.

In the sphere of economics we have thus discerned a universal directionality in the process of modernization towards open capitalist markets, a movement through different stages and a pattern of the shift of power between countries. Now although we have seen the evidence for universal directionality, it does seem that within it considerable variation is possible. Although France for instance is an open economy, it also does have a more protectionist streak, especially when compared to a country like England. Whereas South East Asian countries have strongly opened their domestic markets to foreign companies, countries like Japan and South Korea have been much more restrictive in this field. In the next chapter we will take this issue up again and ask to what extent local traditions can account for such variation. In the next section of this chapter however, we will look at the evidence for a universal pattern of modernization in the field of socio-demographics.

## **B). Socio-demographics**

In the previous section we looked at directionality in economic modernization. We argued that there is a universal tendency towards the implementation of capitalism and this entails a transformation of societies and global order. The victory of capitalism was also part of

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<sup>27</sup> The data here used to illustrate our case is from 2009. In 2010, China did surpass Japan's total GDP and displaced it as the world's second largest economy

Fukuyama's thesis of the End of History. The processes that drive capitalism are related to other patterns in society and demographics. In this section we will look at whether there is a universal pattern of modernization in the field of socio-demographics. The analysis will proceed in three parts. First, we will look at how modernization entails a process of urbanization. Secondly, we will turn to the spread of literacy. Finally, we will look at what modernization implies for the demographic composition of a society. We will see there that modernization entails first a large increase in the size of the population, which in turn goes through specific phases of development. The argument in this section will be that in the field of socio-demographics modernization implies a shift from a rural, mostly illiterate society living in large families towards an urban and literate society of nuclear families.

### **1). Urbanization**

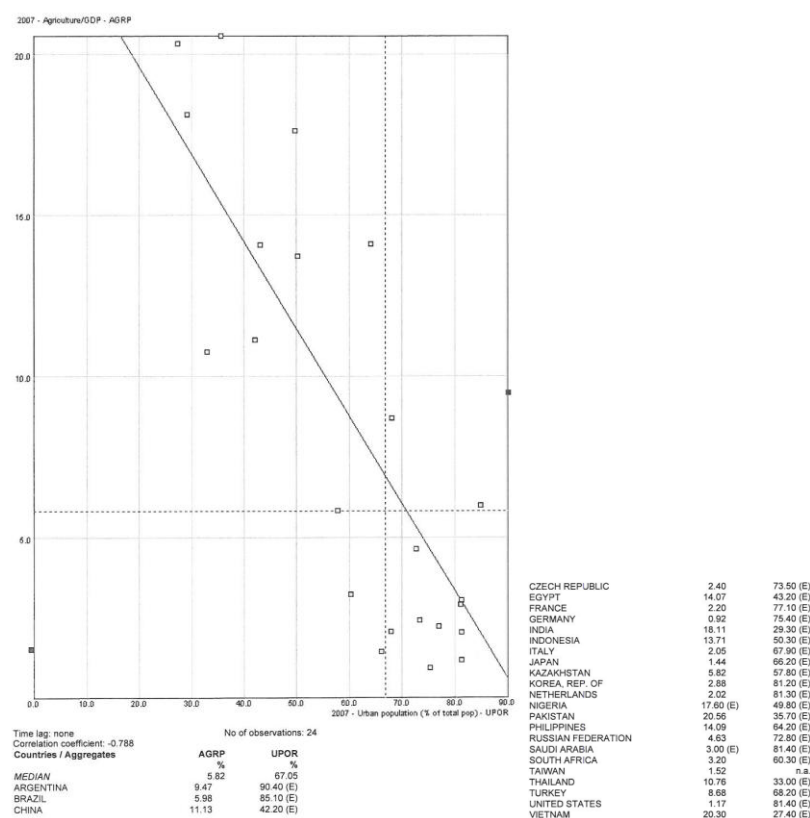
In identifying the stages of economic growth, we saw a shift in the economy from agriculture towards industry and services. This economic change is related to the social development of urbanization.

When an economy is dominated by agriculture, most of the population lives in villages. The limits of pre-modern technology requires that the majority of the population lives in the countryside to meet its need for food. Starting with industrialization, a higher percentage of the population comes to live in urban areas. As we saw in the last section that more countries are seeking wealth by adopting capitalist markets, this entails a global process of urbanization.

According to scientists from North Carolina State University and the University of Georgia, on May 23, 2007, for the first time in history, the majority of the world's population lived in cities. The percentage of the global population living in cities rose from 13% in 1900, to 29% in 1950 to 49% in 2005.

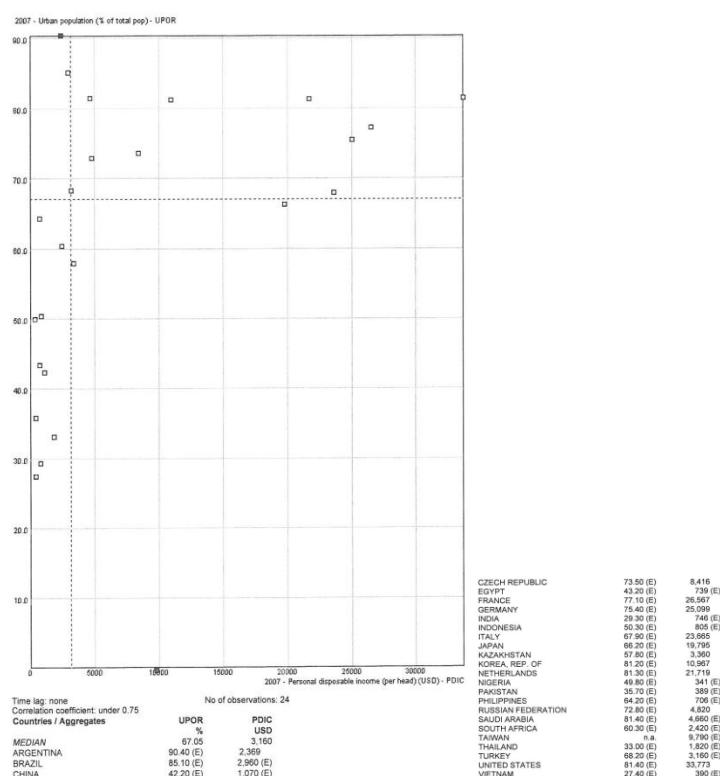
The move from countryside to city stems from both push and pull dynamics. The implementation of modern technology in agriculture decreases the need for labour in that sector,. Moreover, as we will see later in this section, the size of the population is also growing, leading to even more people for whom there is no work in the countryside. This pushes people to look for jobs in the city. At the same time, the development of commerce and industry in the course of modernization creates jobs in the urban areas that require new labourers. Figure 1 shows this relationship between a shift in the composition of the economy and the level of urbanization. A group of 25 countries with different levels of economic development in different global regions are depicted. The figure plots the income generated from agriculture as a percentage of total income on the one hand against the level of urbanization on the other.

**Figure 1. Agriculture/GDP to % urban population**



The figure shows a strong relationship with a correlation coefficient of 0.78. The transformation in the economy from agriculture to industry and services corresponds to a move from the countryside to the cities. Figure 2 connects the level of urbanization with per capita income for the same group of countries.

**Figure 2. Urban population to personal disposable income per head**



The figure also shows a strong relationship between economic development and urbanization.

The pattern however is different. The correlation coefficient is lower, because of the curvilinear relationship. As the level of income rises, a higher percentage of the population lives in cities rather than on the countryside. Instead of developing linearly, there seems to be a certain phase of income levels in which the urbanization process gains momentum, a sort of transition phase. After this phase the rate of urbanization again goes down. The figure shows that between per capita income of \$500 and \$3000, urbanization moves from an average of about 30% to an average of 70%. This suggests that this is the phase in which economic development has reached a threshold and leads to a transition towards an urban society. Once societies move beyond the level of income in this phase, they are all highly urbanized, but the level varies between 70 and 90 %. Japan and Italy are at the low end, whereas South Korea and the Netherlands are positioned at the high end.

This data charted countries with different income levels in a single year. We can also see the pattern if we follow several countries through time.

**Figure 3. Urban Population 1990-2008**

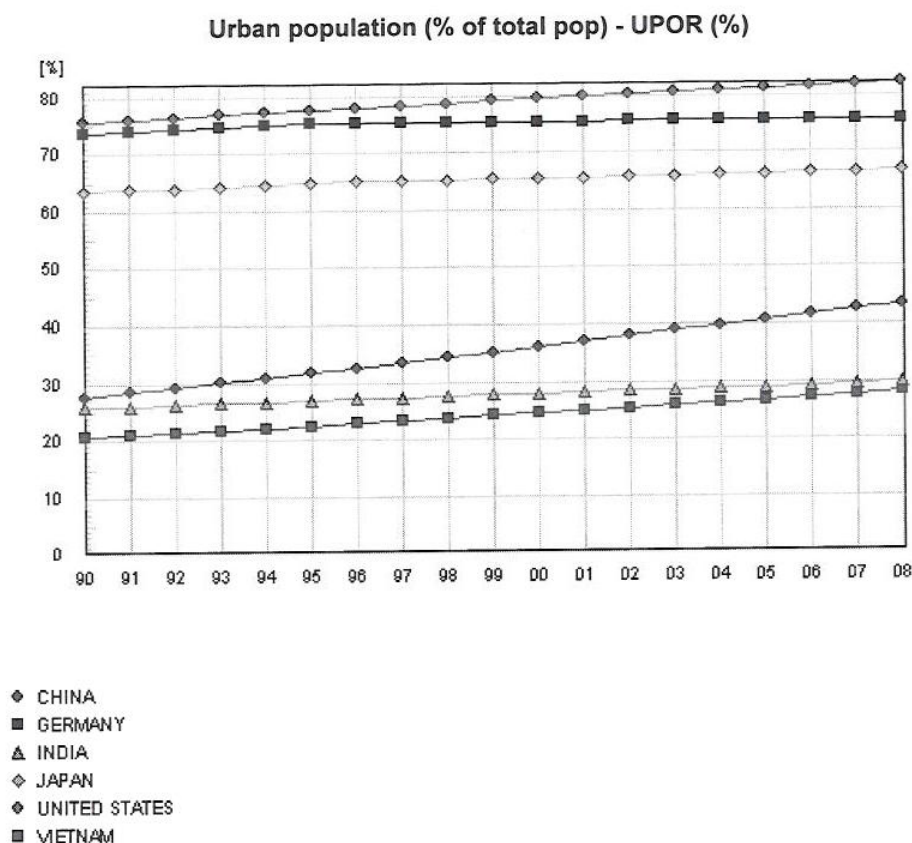


Figure 3 shows the level of urbanization for three developing countries and three developed countries over the period 1990 to 2008. The three developed countries, the United States, Germany and Japan are already highly urbanized and there is little change over this period. In the three developing countries, China, India, and Vietnam, we see a clearer upward trend. What is noticeable is that the rise is steepest for China, which has the highest per capita income level of these three countries. This suggests that it has reached the threshold or transition phase after which urbanization picks up pace. The urbanization level increased from 28% in 1990 to 44% in 2008. India and Vietnam have not yet reached that point and figure 2 suggests that at a higher level of income in the future, the rate of urbanization will also go up in these countries.

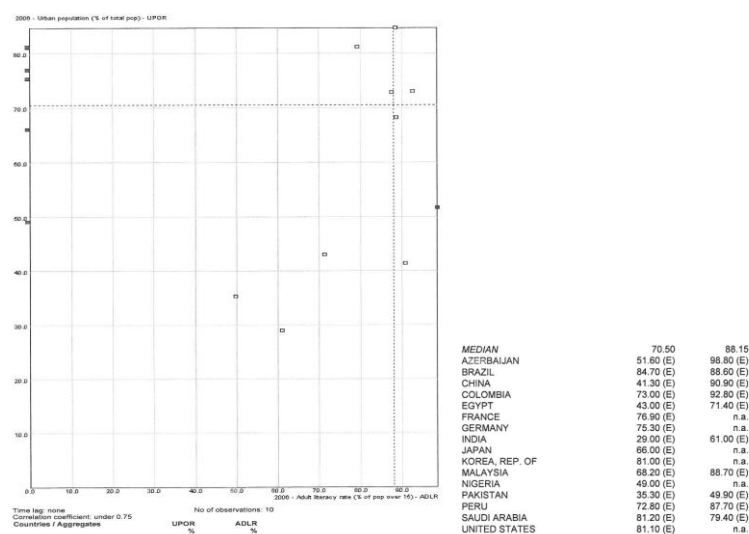
## 2). Literacy

The move from the countryside to the city is associated with another development, namely a rise in literacy. Certain traditional rural societies can have high levels of literacy, stemming for instance from religious duties. However, for the livelihood of peasants, which works through oral traditions and face-to-face contact, literacy is not a necessity. This is different in

an urban and industrial context. Industrial work often requires people to be able to read and write, as there is less direct contact between all those working in a factory and often new methods and tools are imported from far away. It is also life in the city which is much more tied to the written word. Lewis Mumford argues that the modern city is intimately connected, and even based on, the circulation of ‘paper’. From journals and newspapers to registers, advertisements, mortgages and other contracts, city life is permeated with the written word.<sup>28</sup>

Figure 4 illustrates this relationship. Between countries, we see a correlation between higher literacy rates and higher levels of urbanization.

**Figure 4**



Moreover, it is not just the ability to read and write, but the work done in cities also requires a population that followed formal education. The further a country develops economically, the more it requires a highly education population. After moving from agriculture to industry, the shift towards services, again requires a higher level of education.

The original authors of Modernization Theory also investigated this social change. Alex Inkeles for instance stated that just as work moves from the private household (the farm) to the public factory, education moves more from the household to the public school. The factory and the school are two central institutions of modernization.<sup>29</sup>

Daniel Lerner is another of Modernization Theory’s classical authors who discussed urbanization and literacy rates in the context of communication. His *The Passing of Traditional Society* of 1965 was a study of the process of Modernization in several Middle

<sup>28</sup> L. Mumford, *The Culture of Cities*, Westport: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1981, p. 256

<sup>29</sup> A. Inkeles, *Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Countries*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999, pp. 133-191



Eastern societies.<sup>30</sup> He describes a sequence in three phases. The first is a phase of urbanization. The city requires a literate population to read labels, check signs and ride subways. When urbanization rates slow, next literacy rates go up. When a society is mostly literate, people generate new sorts of desires and means of satisfying them. The third phase is characterized by an increase in media consumption and participation. To test the correlations between urbanization, literacy and media consumption, Lerner conducted questionnaires in different countries. He found strong correlations between these fields, with which he could divide the populations into groups of ‘moderns’, ‘transitionals’, and ‘traditionals’. The category of moderns is characterized by being urban, literate and high media consumption.

### 3). Demographics

The next field we will turn to concerns the demographic characteristics of a society, which is another field in which a major social transformation takes place in the process of modernization.

This first of all entails a tremendous growth in the size of the population. When a country starts to modernize, it urbanizes, but the total population also grows. Throughout most of history, world population grew slowly and over periods of centuries the size of the world population did not change radically. Then, together with the Industrial Revolution, the West experienced a steady long-term growth of the population. In the course of the twentieth century this process spread to all corners of the globe, leading to an unprecedented growth in the world’s population. According to estimates for the period from 1000 AD to 1500 AD show a rise from 310 million to 490 million people, a rise of about 60 percent in 500 years. From 1850 onwards, growth in world population accelerates. In 1900, world population was 1.68 billion. After a century, in 2000, this figure stood at 6.06 billion, a rise of more than 300%.<sup>31</sup>

Not only has this dynamic of population growth spread from the West to the rest of the world, but this process is also taking place there at a much more rapid pace. Hernando de Soto shows that the transformation in Britain from a population of 8 million to its current size, took 250 years. The same increase in the size of the population is happening in Indonesia in a period of 40 years.<sup>32</sup>

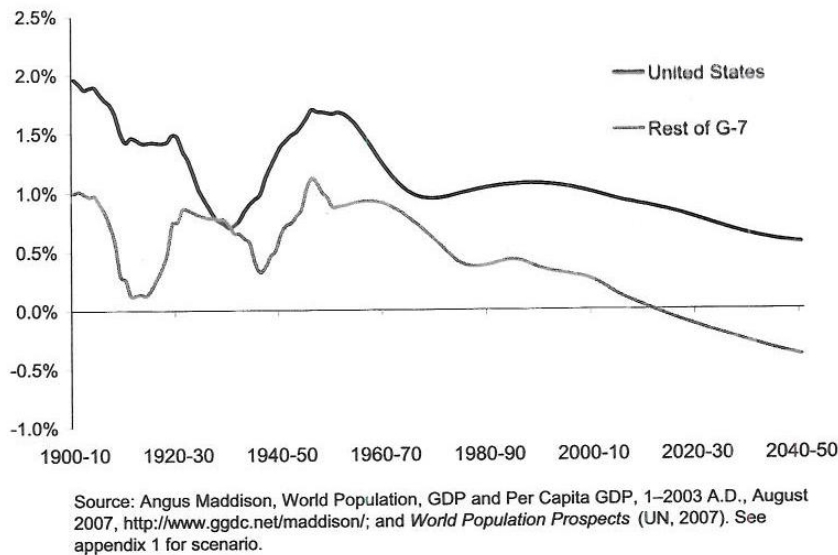
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<sup>30</sup> D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, New York: The Free Press, 1966 (1958)

<sup>31</sup> A. Szirmai, *The Dynamics of Socio-Economic Development: An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 144

<sup>32</sup> H. de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, New York: Basic Books, 2000, p. 73

In the course of modernization, population size grows, but this process does not go on indefinitely. Rather, after a certain period of time, population growth declines again and can even turn negative. The next chart shows how population growth has gone down in the twentieth century in the United States and the rest of the G-7. After the recovery from the Second World War, population growth went down in the fifties and for the G-7 excluding the U.S., it is projected to turn negative in the next decade.



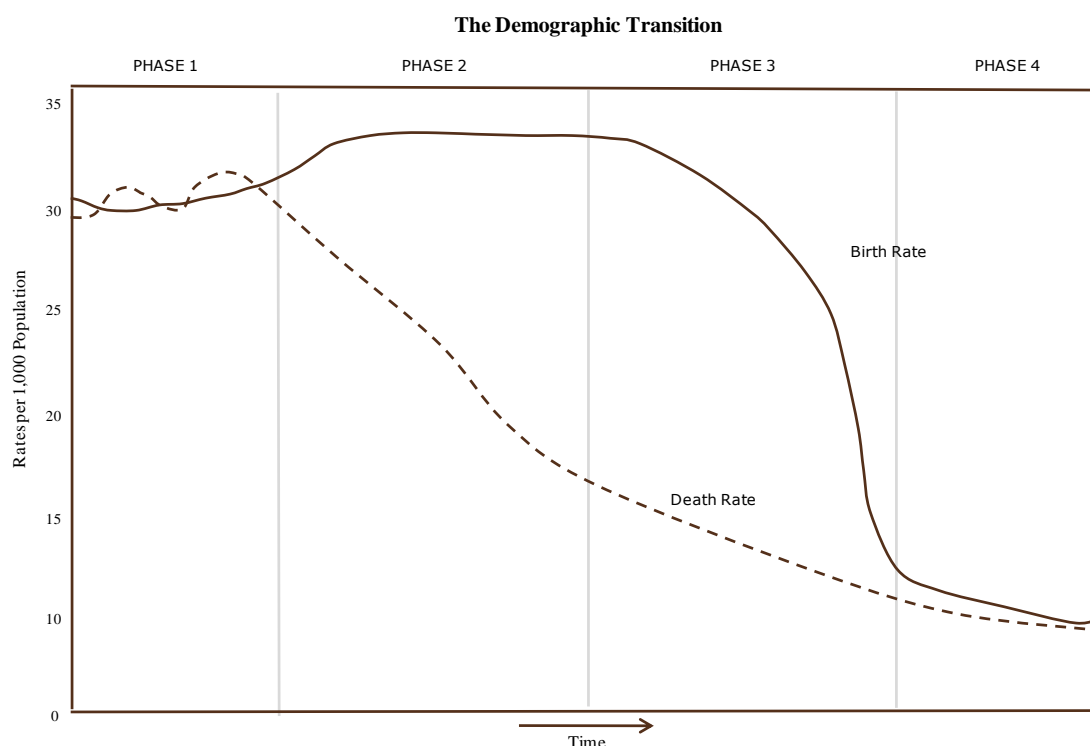
Similarly, from the 1970's on, the annual growth rate for developing countries also started to come down.

What explains these demographic patterns and are they inherent to modernization? We can bring these demographic changes together in a Demographic Transition Model (DTM), which describes several phases that countries go through. In traditional societies, there is little population growth. In these predominantly rural societies, the birth rates are high, but so are the mortality rates. The median age is also relatively low. The first thing that changes in the course of modernization is a decrease in the (infant) mortality rate, due to improvements in general living conditions. It is modern technology which improves sanitary conditions, provides vaccinations and general health care. While birth rates remain high, the decrease in mortality rates leads to the above mentioned population explosion. As a result, the structure of the population becomes more youthful, also described as a 'child bulge'.<sup>33</sup> Later on, several factors combine to lead to a decline in birth rates. Prominent among them is urbanization. In rural life, having many offspring is an economic necessity. From a young age on, they provide labour to cultivate the land, and when the parents get old, children are the most important means of sustenance for them. In an urban context, the situation is altered. From an economic perspective, having children is no longer an economic necessity, but rather a high cost. With salary work, pension systems and social welfare, people have other sources of income for

<sup>33</sup> For a description of this process and its effects, see G. Heinsohn, *Söhne und Weltmacht. Terror im Aufstieg und Fall der Nationen*, Bern: Orell Füssli Verlag, 2003

when they reach old age. We saw that urbanization goes together with a rise in literacy. In cities, work and the state require young people to have an extensive education before they enter the labour market. This makes having children much more expensive in urban areas than in a traditional rural town. Research also shows other factors that lead to a decline in birth rates. A rise in the child-rearing age also limits the number of children a woman can have in the course of her life. This is often associated with longer and better schooling for girls. Another factor contributing to a decrease in birth rates is the availability of contraceptives. Improved living conditions not only decrease mortality in children, but throughout the whole population, as a result of which life expectancy goes up. In the nineteen-fifties, life expectancy in Europe was between sixty and seventy years old. Currently it stands between eighty and ninety. This increase in life expectancy thus leads to the process of ageing. Throughout these different phases, the demographic composition of the population radically changes. The next graph describes this dynamic and distinguishes the four phases of the Demographic Transition Model.

## *The Demographic Transition Model<sup>34</sup>*



Phase 1: Birth rates and death rates are high, and there is little population growth.

Phase 2: Death rates drop, birth rates remain high and may even rise. The size of the total population increases and the age structure of the population rapidly becomes more youthful.

Phase 3: Birth rates drop and the rate of population increase slows down.

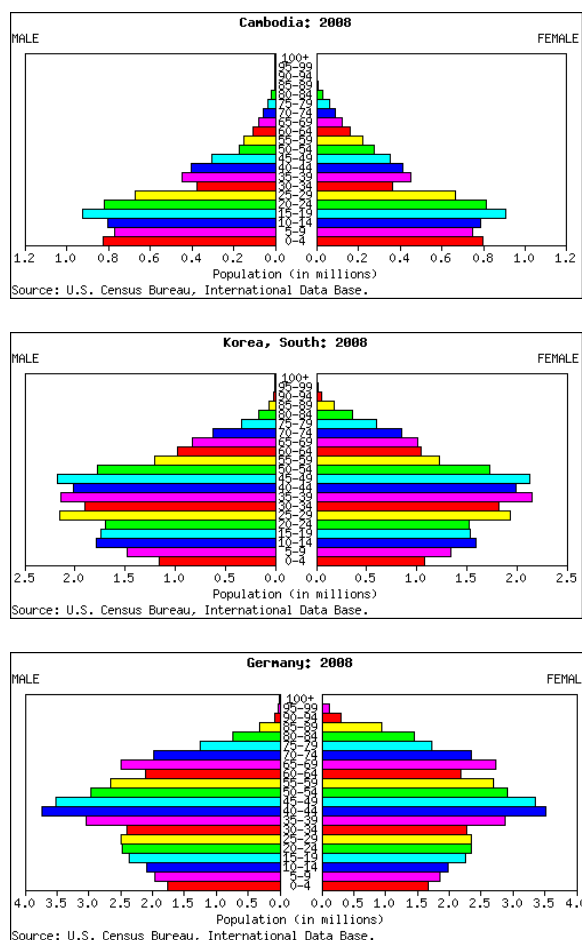
Phase 4: Birth and death rates are low, population growth is less than 1 percent per annum, and the average age of the population increases.

The change in the demographic composition of a society implies a change in the composition of the household. In traditional rural societies, families have many children and several generations would live together under one roof. Throughout the transition, birth rates go down, families become smaller, people have a higher life expectancy and the elderly are no longer required to live with their children. The forces of modernization change the traditional extended family into the modern nuclear family.

The U.S. Census Bureau represents the demographic composition of countries in age pyramids. We can illustrate this structural change by looking at the demographic composition of three countries at different levels of the above described dynamic: Cambodia, South Korea and Germany.

<sup>34</sup> From: B.W. Blouet, O.M. Blouet, *Latin America and the Caribbean: A systematic and Regional Survey*, Hoboken: Wiley Publishing, 2004, p. 132

*Graph: Demographic Composition Cambodia, South Korea, Germany in 2008*



The economic development we described in the previous section is a prime factor in these demographic changes through improving living standards and the process of urbanization that is entailed by it. These demographic changes can in their turn also provide a strong impetus to economic growth. Economic growth can increase greatly at a certain phase of the demographic transition. As the demographic composition changes, the ratio between those of working age and those who are dependent on them (children and the elderly) changes. This is the ‘dependency ratio’ of a society.

There is a certain phase in the demographic development in which a very large part of the population is of working age, a phase called the ‘demographic dividend’. We saw that in phase two of the Demographic Transition Model, the percentage of young people rises as a result of high birth rates and lowered mortality rates. In this phase, the percentage of those at working age is low, as this child bulge is dependent on others for their subsistence. In time, this cohort comes of working age. In this phase, greying has not yet set in, so there is no large group of elderly, who are also economically dependent. And as the birth rates declines in time, the percentage of children, the other economically dependent category also goes down. Hence in this phase a very large part of the population is of working age, which can underpin

economic growth. If we look at the economic growth of East Asian countries, we see that during the boom years of their development, they also benefitted from the demographic dividend. We can also see phenomenon by looking at the three demographic pyramids above. Cambodia is in phase 2 and due to its child bulge has not yet reached the phase of demographic dividend. Although the cohorts of the elderly are small, due to the size of the youngest cohort, the percentage of the population in working age is relatively low. In South Korea, the size of the cohort of elderly is not yet very high. On the other hand, the birth rate has gone down in recent decades. This means that South Korea is currently experiencing a demographic dividend. Germany has already gone past this point. The percentage of children there is low, but due to greying, the percentage of pensioners, who are also economically dependent, has grown.

This phase of demographic dividend can stimulate economic growth, but does not necessarily lead to it. If the growth in employment does not keep up with the increase in those of working age, the large cohorts of youths can also be a factor of destabilization. Violent revolutions have also been associated with this phase and much of the Islamic world is currently suffering from a very youthful population but weak economic development, contributing to radicalism.

The Demographic Transition Model describes a global pattern, but this does not mean that it happens everywhere at the same speed and extent. The time it takes countries to go through the phases can differ strongly. The transition is for instance happening much more rapidly in East Asia than in other parts of the world. Also, the extent of the decline in birth rates also diverges considerably. In Western and Eastern Europe and Japan, birth rates have fallen far below replacement levels (the level required to maintain the current size of the population). In the U.S. however, the birth rate is close to replacement level. Also, in France there seems to be an upward trend in birth rates in recent years. There is thus divergence between countries within the demographic transition.

The universal pattern of demographic change that we have described has not ended. The median age is globally going up. It is not clear what the consequences of the combination of low birth rates and ageing will be. It could economically and politically seriously strain societies.<sup>35</sup> So it might be that the process of modernization leads to a demographic situation that is unsustainable, or that new phases have to be added to the model. What we can say currently, is that the described model is unfolding universally.

In section A we discussed several features of the way in which economic development unfolds universally. We discussed the role of trade, the stages of development through different sectors and the way economic power shifts internationally. In this section we looked at socio-demographic factors. What is the directionality we found here? We saw that together

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<sup>35</sup> For an analysis of the geopolitical implications of ageing see: R. Jackson, N. Howe et al., *The Graying of the Great Powers: Demography and Geopolitics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2006

with the move away from agriculture in the economy, a process of urbanization occurs. This is in turn correlated with a rise in literacy rates. Finally, a demographic transformation occurs leading to a upsurge in the size of the population and a shift from the extended rural family to the nuclear urban family. We saw that the demographic transition can be accompanied by political instability and we linked this to the availability of employment. Other factors seem to play a role here too. In some countries the transition is accompanied by much more instability than others. Why have East Asian countries managed this much better than other countries in other regions? A part of this can be explained by better economic policies, but these countries too have faced hardships like poverty, hunger and unemployment. What could account for the divergence in the degree of stability between countries? This is something we will have to return to in the next chapter. In sections C and D of this chapter we will look at the transformations that occur during the process of modernization in the spheres of the state and the type of regime respectively.

### **C). The state and its Institutions**

When we looked at the stages of economic growth in section A, we saw that certain aspects of economic growth are connected with state-building. In this section we will focus on the state and look at what happens to it in the process of modernization. Is there something like a modern state and if so, what are its characteristics? Through the work of Norbert Elias, we will argue that an increase in interdependence, which is caused by the growth of capitalist markets, the modern national state emerged. We will see that this type of state displaced other types of states, like city-states and empires, through the work of Charles Tilly. Next we will focus on two aspects that are central to the modern state. First we will look at the development of a regulatory framework that protects property rights. The economic development, described in section A requires and is strengthened by such a framework. Secondly, we will look at the professionalization of the state as it is separated from aristocratic and royal influence and is rationalized or bureaucratized (as Max Weber argued). In the final part of this section, we will look more closely at one specific institution of the state where this happened, the army. As the army is concerned with life and death, or the survival of state and society, it is an important institution and one in which we can discern the process of the modernization of the state.

Most of the authors we will discuss in this section did not profess to belong to the school of Modernization Theory. Max Weber's work predates this project and is considered as one of its fathers. Norbert Elias and Charles Tilly both contributed to the understanding of modernization of the state. Moreover, the dynamics they describe tie in well with what we have already analyzed as the forces modernization.

## 1). The National State

Sociologist Norbert Elias has looked at the rise of the modern state and focused specifically on France.<sup>36</sup> The modern state, according to him, originates from an increase in interdependence in the early modern age. Trade increased and this brought the relatively autarkic regions of feudalism more into contact with one another. This contact spurred a competition between local lords for pre-eminence over the region. Before the modern age there was also competition and conquest between lords. However, the lack of interdependence weakened the possibility of centralized rule, and caused centrifugal forces to prevail in the vast regions of empires. The higher level of interdependence required uniform laws and rule, which could be established once local rulers were defeated. Elias traces how the different houses fought each other for the rule of France. With the slow eradication of local nobility a more centralized regime was established. Once someone became the monopolist of a region, he would strip the other nobility of their right to use violence. Instead, the nobility became more and more tied to the royal court.<sup>37</sup> The monopolist banned violence from the public sphere and made it his own prerogative. The increase in interdependence made the business of governing more complex and this required an extensive bureaucracy. Instead of the old clerical and aristocratic agents, the need grew for a technically educated elite drawn more and more from the new bourgeois classes. With the increase in the complexity of the state and its institutions, its character also changed. Under feudalism, the state and all of its revenues were the private property of the ruler. With the modern formalized state, a distinction was made between public property and the private property of the ruler.

The explanatory variable in Elias' analysis of the formation of the modern state is the growth of interdependence. A higher level of interdependence results from the forces of capitalism as well as the implementation of new technologies that for instance make transport or communication easier. Both factors we already encountered in our investigation of universal modernization, which means that the emergence of the modern state is tied to other aspects of modernization.

Complementary to Elias' research, we can look at the development of modern states in an investigation of a wider range of countries in the work of Charles Tilly.<sup>38</sup> According to Tilly, countries took different trajectories, but they all moved towards one type of state, the

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<sup>36</sup> N. Elias, *Het Civilisatie-proces: Sociogenetische en psychogenetische onderzoeken*, Amsterdam: Boom, 2001

<sup>37</sup> This development is the origin of Elias' famous 'civilization process', which required the control of violence and the self-monitoring of emotions, first in the aristocracy, from which it spread to the population at large, see idem pp. 579-651

<sup>38</sup> C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2001 (1990) and C. Tilly, 'War Making and State making as Organized Crime', in: P.B. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, T. Skocpol (eds), *Bringing the State Back in*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 169-191



national state, which he defines as: states governing multiple contiguous regions and their cities by means of centralized, differentiated, and autonomous structures. Throughout history, such states have been rare. States throughout history have usually been non-national: empires or city-states. In his work, he seeks to explain why the national state has become the dominant model and why other types of states went into decline. His work thus contributes to the question we are addressing in this chapter, whether there is a universal directionality in the process of modernization. He formulates his research question as follows:

What accounts for the great variation over time and space in the kinds of states that have prevailed in Europe since AD 990, and why did European states eventually converge on different variations of the national state? Why were the directions of change so similar and the paths so different?<sup>39</sup>

Before the modern age, examples of different forms of states were the city-states of Italy (Venice, Genoa, Florence) and the grand empires of Eastern Europe (Russia, Poland, the Ottoman Empire). Central in the replacement of these type of states with the national state were the factors of ‘coercion’ and ‘capital’. From around the year 1500 war became an increasingly expensive and complex matter, due to what we have called ‘Newtonian technology’. Gunpowder had been introduced in warfare in an earlier phase. With the invention and diffusion of firearms however, the politics of war-making changed. It meant that only monarchs that could cast cannon and build cannon-resistant fortresses could survive. War also moved from open plains to the siege of cities. The portable musketry in the early sixteenth century enhanced the importance of trained infantry. In the naval field, sailing vessels increasingly carried large guns, which also increased the costs for rulers. War thus became more costly, limiting the amount of people who could initiate it: in the thirteenth century, every nobleman had a sword. In the twenty-first century no private individual owns an aircraft carrier.

The increased cost of war, made access to capital a crucial factor for states. This gave an advantage to the states with commercial cities and their capitalist activity. This activity was both a direct source of income for rulers in the form of loans, as well as an indirect source through the monetization of the economy. Governments that can borrow, can separate their expenditures from their revenues, and spend ahead of it, increasing the ease of warfare. The lack of capitalist activity greatly hindered the capacity of the vast rural empires (or coercion – intensive states) in the eastern part of Europe.

Initially, the presence of such activity gave an impulse to the highly entrepreneurial city-states (or capital-intensive states). These city-states however, had relatively small populations to draw their soldiers from and generally resorted to hired mercenaries. Since the fourteenth century, the Italian city-states relied on the *condottieri* for their protection. In the course of the sixteenth century, the scale of war expanded and the use of mercenaries became generalized.

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<sup>39</sup> C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990*, p. 5

Up to the seventeenth century, armies of European countries to a large part consisted of mercenaries recruited by powerful lords and military entrepreneurs.

Armies of mercenaries however, also had major setbacks. Apart from being expensive, the basis of their work was purely contractual and thus insecure. Rebellion and rivalry for power were serious dangers. Unsatisfied mercenaries or those that were paid late would often resort to a looting of the local population. This made it more attractive for rulers to enlist their own populations who were more loyal. This was made possible through their increased grip on the aristocracy as well as the population at large. The domestic population, commanded by its ruling class provided a cheaper and more reliable military. The increased costs of warfare initially favoured the commercial city-states. The move towards mass armies consisting of the domestic population was advantageous to countries with large populations. The city-states only had the former (capital), whereas empires only had the latter (coerced population). As a result, the balance of power shifted towards countries with both capital (commercial centres) and coercion (large populations to draw on for the military) like England, France and later Germany. The French Revolution and Napoleon dealt the death blow to the mercenary system and forced all competitors to draft their own populations. In the words of the Prussian military thinker Clausewitz:

Whilst, according to the usual way of seeing things, all hopes were placed on a very limited military force in 1793, such a force as no one had any conception of made its appearance. War had again become an affair of the people, and that of a people numbering thirty millions, every one of whom regarded himself as a citizen of the State... By this participation of the people in the War instead of a Cabinet and an Army, a whole Nation with its natural weight came into the scale. Henceforth, the means available – the efforts which might be called forth – had no longer any definite limits; the energy with which the War itself might be conducted had no longer any counterpoise, and consequently the danger for the adversary had risen to the extreme.<sup>40</sup>

From the increasingly costly and complex activity of war, rulers had to centralize power and penetrate deeper into their societies. The extraction of resources required an extensive bureaucracy to which we will return later in this section. Centralized control implied increased surveillance and policing by the armed forces.<sup>41</sup> This paralleled the change in government revenues from which they paid for wars. These shifted from the more physical and arbitrary tributes and rents towards payments on flows (excise, customs, tolls), payments on stocks (direct taxes on land or property) and income taxes. This shift is associated with a more monetized economy and required an elaborate system of continuous surveillance. In other words, states came to govern through centralized, differentiated and autonomous structures; states gradually converged on the model of the national state.

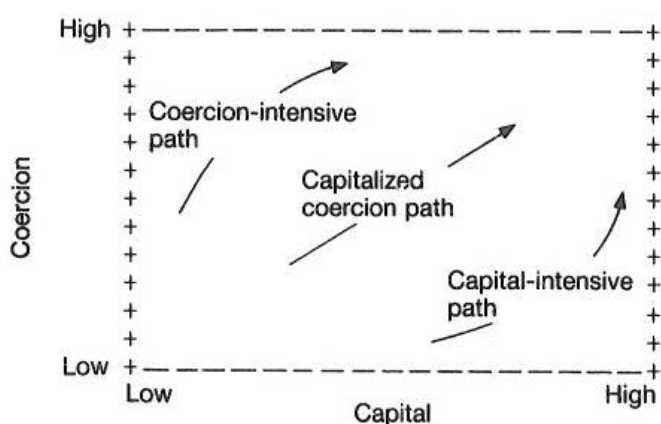
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<sup>40</sup> C. von Clausewitz, *On War*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968 (1832), pp. 384-385

<sup>41</sup> The control and the resources that the rulers needed led to a process of bargaining with the population which created representational and judicial institutions like courts of appeal. We will return to this dynamic in the next section when we look at the rise of modern democracy.

Countries did take different paths towards the national state as they had different starting conditions. Out of earlier empires, national states developed through a more coercion-intensive path. This was the case for Russia, Poland, Finland, but also Sicily. Out of the commercial city-states a more capital-intensive path was taken by countries like the Netherlands, Flanders and Northern Italy. Countries with both large rural populations as well as commercial cities followed a path of 'capitalized coercion'. This was the case with the powerful national states at the heart of Europe: France, England and Germany. Although countries followed different paths, they all developed in the direction of more capital and more coercion, which is depicted in the next graph.

*Graph. Trajectories towards the national state*<sup>42</sup>



## 2). The regulatory framework and the institutions of property rights

In this section up till now we have seen how the rise of the capitalist economy that was described in earlier sections stimulated the creation of the modern state with its institutions. The modern state however, is not only shaped by capitalist economics, but also underpins and fosters economic development by providing a clear regulatory framework and the protection of property rights.

The school of neo-institutionalism emphasizes the extent to which trade, but also the development of new technology, is made possible by surrounding institutions. Patents and intellectual property rights for example gave people the security to invest in technological innovation. It protected their inventions and brought revenues that paid off large investments. When these rights are not enforced, the impetus to make large investments is weakened as others could reap the benefits of an investment without paying for its costs. The protection of private property also lowered the transaction costs for economic actors, as they would not

<sup>42</sup> C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990*, p. 133

anymore have to secure their rights themselves, which greatly stimulated growth. Douglas North and Robert Thomas have argued that the rise of the West was intimately tied to the institutions that protected private property.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the separation of economics and science from political influence, the high degree of decentralization and flexible public and private structures are also part of the institutions of the modern state that stimulated the economic growth of the West.<sup>44</sup> So are these institutions and the regulatory framework that protect private property part and parcel of the universal development of modernization? Can these observations be generalized outside the history of the West?

It has been argued by Fareed Zakaria that the protection of private property has been central in the success of East Asian nations in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, within the global financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank, that historically had a strong focus on pure economics, there is a growing recognition of the importance of the legal and institutional framework under which a market works. The World Bank, for instance, yearly ranks countries on the basis of the 'ease of Doing Business', an indicator into which several elements of the regulatory and institutional framework are included. It includes factors like the protection and registering of property rights and the enforcement of contract by authorities. The indicator has a strong positive correlation with the level of economic growth, implying it is a relevant variable in the process of modernization. Higher levels of economic development go together with institutions that provide protection of property and enforce clear regulations.

Economist Hernando de Soto has elaborated on how this mechanism works and how the regulatory framework can stimulate the creation of capital. The lack of capital is a factor that inhibits the development of many poor countries.<sup>46</sup>

Property is not the same as capital. Many people in the Third World do not lack property: they often have houses, goods they produce and purchase and many developing countries have thriving market places. What they often do lack, though, is capital. It is the regulatory framework that can transform property into capital. This transformation of property into capital by the regulatory framework is done through several mechanisms.

This framework first of all turns property into economic potential. As economic potential, the house people live in is not a physical good, but as an economic concept, or an 'idea'. This happens when it is used as collateral for a loan, but also as the address from where to collect

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<sup>43</sup> D. North & R. Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World: A New Economic History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973

<sup>44</sup> N. Rosenberg & L.E. Birdzell Jr., *How the West Grew Rich: The Economic Transformation of the Industrial World*, New York: Basic Books, 1985

<sup>45</sup> F. Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004

<sup>46</sup> H. de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital*, the following text draws on chapter III of the book

debt, interest, taxes, as the base from which individuals can do economic transactions and as a reliable entry point for utility companies. Without a regulatory framework that fixes and protects property, these processes are not possible.

A second function of the regulatory framework is that it incorporates information into one system. In many developing countries there are many overlapping judicial systems, but even in the California of mid-nineteenth century, there were about 800 different jurisdictions for property, all of them with their own archives and rules. Thirdly, through the regulatory system, people become accountable. It makes it possible to identify, sue, and punish perpetrators. Incorrect behaviour is stored in the system, making it more clear who are trustworthy partners and who are not.

Another effect of the regulatory framework is that property is made fungible: it can be combined, split, transported and used because it is disconnected from its physical existence. Stocks in financial markets are just one example of this. Communication concerning property and economic potential is also revolutionized. This has a tremendous effect on utility companies that provide electricity, water or gas. Outside of the West, technical and financial losses and theft account for about 30 to 50% of supplies. Finally, the regulatory framework protects transactions which makes it possible to do large transactions on paper without physically moving goods. This makes the difference between bringing pigs to a market to sell them individually and the purchase of the ownership rights of the pigs on paper or electronically.

In conclusion, a clear regulatory framework that protects property rights, was not just crucial for the rise of the West, but is globally part of the process of modernization.

### **3). The Bureaucracy**

After looking at regulation, we will now turn to a second aspect of the modern national state, the bureaucracy. The capitalist economy, technological innovation, public finance and the new regulatory system all require the presence of an extensive bureaucracy. The phenomenon of bureaucracy is not specifically modern and historical China, Egypt and the Ottoman empire are examples of ancient empires that had extensive bureaucracies. The origins of these bureaucracies to a certain extent coincide with those of the modern bureaucracy. In ancient Egypt, it was the management of the land, infrastructure and population with regard to the Nile that fostered bureaucratization in the same way that the public railroads required official bureaucratic administration in the modern age. Yet modern bureaucracy stands out in comparison with historical examples of bureaucracy. It is much more formalized than previous forms through the separation of tasks and clear regulations. Moreover, central to the modern bureaucracy is that it is professionalized and has a logic of its own that works

insulated from other forces in society. The sociologist Max Weber conceptualized the concept of bureaucracy. He distinguished six characteristics of the modern bureaucracy.<sup>47</sup>

The first is that of jurisdictional areas, which means that regular activities are assigned as official duties, delimited by rules and methodical provision. Throughout history, permanent agencies with fixed jurisdiction have been exceptional. In most cases, the ruler was assisted by personal trustees, table-companions and court-servants. In many contemporary developing countries in Africa and the Middle East several policy fields have not been made autonomous and put under bureaucratic control, but are the direct prerogative of the ruler.<sup>48</sup> In many countries, the ruler is head of the state as well as chief of staff the highest court of justice.

The second characteristic concerns office hierarchy and channels of appeal. The supervision of lower offices by higher ones in a precisely regulated manner leads to a monocratic system. There is a clear order of rank and lower offices cannot overrule higher offices.

Thirdly, the modern bureaucratic office is based on written documents (files) which are preserved in their original form. Personal concerns should be separated from official procedures. Throughout the civil service, the official activity is separated from the private life of the official. We saw above that with the creation of the modern state, the king also started to make a distinction between his property and the public good which previously did not exist. Throughout the modern bureaucracy, this distinction is also applied.

The fourth and fifth principle are the thorough training in fields of specialization and the demand of the full working capacity of the official. In former times, often notables or other aristocrats fulfilled official functions. The work was done as part of the aristocratic way of life that also consisted of many other activities. People were driven by honour, for instance, instead of technical expertise. Official business often also was a secondary activity for nobles.

Finally, bureaucracy involves the following of general rules which are relatively stable, exhaustive and which can be learned. This ties in with the special technical expertise the official must have. It makes the business of the bureaucrat focused on abstract issues.

The modern expert replaces many former types of executives. In traditional bureaucracies, the official was often held to an idea of the 'the cultivated man'. This type could be knightly, ascetic, literary, gymnastic-humanist or of the 'gentleman' type. Examples are the Confucian

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<sup>47</sup> M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968 (1954), pp. 956-1005. What is important to note about Weber's use of the term 'bureaucracy' is that he did not restrict it to the public sphere. The economic sphere is also being bureaucratized. In the public sphere he speaks of 'bureaucratic agency' and in the private sphere of 'bureaucratic enterprise'.

Max Weber distinguished three types of authority: tradition, charisma and rational regulation. Something or someone can have authority because it appeals to some kind of sacred tradition, the personal qualities of another person or to rational norms. Modern bureaucracy rests on this last type of authority.

<sup>48</sup> See S.P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968, pp. 109-121

scholar and the Christian knight. The concept of the cultivated man stands in opposition to the modern specialist. Concerning the transition to bureaucratization in Spain, J.H. Elliott noted:

If warfare was a dominant theme in the history of Spain under Charles V and Philip II, bureaucratization was another...The replacement of the warrior-king Charles V by a sedentary Philip II, who spent his working days at his desk surrounded by piles of documents, fittingly symbolized the transformation of the Spanish Empire as it passed out of the age of the conquistador into the age of the Civil Servant.<sup>49</sup>

In the last part of this section, we will look more closely at this logic of bureaucratization in one institution of the state, the military. In the process of modernization, the military was separated from aristocratic influences and developed its own logic with internal standards of professionalism.

#### **4). The Case of the Military**

We have seen that in the process of modernization, the state develops into a certain direction as it becomes more complex and its structures are differentiated. The state bureaucracy becomes differentiated from other forms of authority and develops its own form of organization and logic. Through this differentiation, the bureaucracy is rationalized by adherence to only universal and meritocratic standards. One part of the state that we will look into now is the transformation of the military. We already saw how the activity of war-making was important in the process of the formation of the national state. This makes it interesting to focus specifically on modernization within this institution of the military. Moreover, being concerned with life and death, as the guardian of the survival of the state and society, it is a focal point in which we can analyze the process of modernization. It was the military defeat of Prussia that put it on the path of modernization. The destruction of the Japanese fleet by Commodore Matthew Perry led to the tumultuous period that ended Japan's more than 200 year isolation from the world. With the Meiji Restoration in 1868 Japan started to industrialize in order to defend its position in the world. The defeat of the Ottoman empire in the First World War made the large-scale reforms of Kemal 'Ataturk' possible. The Japanese occupation and the war with North Korea led to military reform in South Korea after which general Park Chung Hee started the industrialization of the country. Hence in many cases military reform was the focal point of modernization. How is the military reformed in the course of modernization?

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<sup>49</sup> Cited from C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*, p. 75

The same process of the professionalization and becoming autonomous of the bureaucracy, that Max Weber described, occurred within the military. In the century between 1800 and 1900, the military changed from an organization based on the assumptions of an aristocratic world view to one based on meritocratic, rationalized and professionalized principles.

Before 1800 officers were either mercenaries or aristocrats and neither of the two pursued their tasks professionally. For the mercenary it was business and for the aristocrat it was a hobby. Instead of seeking to develop an expertise it was done for either pecuniary goals or for honor and adventure. After the feudal era, the mercenary was a dominant figure, but as we saw in the discussion of the work of Tilly, there were many disadvantages to this. With the strengthening of national monarchs, the military high ranks were more and more staffed with aristocrats. In the following we will show how in the course of modernization, aristocratic influence was replaced by meritocracy and professionalism. We will describe this development in four fields: the requirements for entry into military education, the arrangements for advancement, the content of military education and competence or esprit. For this analysis, we will mostly draw from Samuel Huntington's study *The Soldier and the State* as well as Steven Ozment's *A Mighty Fortress*.<sup>50</sup>

In the eighteenth century, aristocratic birth was in most of Europe a requirement for *entry* into the schools for all but the technical functions in the military. In Prussia, Fredrick the Great expelled all bourgeois elements from the military because he believed only aristocrats had a sense of honor, loyalty and courage. Admission to military schools in France and Prussia was also limited to those of noble birth. In England an aristocracy of wealth controlled the army. Offices could be purchased and this led to a property requirement for the ranks of the military.

A radical change to this system of entry was initiated by Prussia after its defeat at Jena in 1806 by the army of Napoleon. In 1808 a decree abolished all class restrictions on entry into the army. Furthermore, educational and examination requirements were established to improve the competence of the officers corps. In France, aristocratic limitations on entry were abolished during the French Revolution. The newly created institute St. Cyr firmly established the principle of entry only by competition in the schools or ranks. New military schools, the Ecole Polytechnique, the Special Military School, and several naval schools were set up in the decades after the French Revolution. In the British army aristocratic obstacles to entry persisted much longer. First with the creation of the Royal Military College at Sandhurst in 1802, commissions were received without purchase, but attendance to such military schools was not mandatory for all officers, nor were there provisions for adequate general education comparable to the Prussian gymnasium or the French lycee. This was only changed in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

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<sup>50</sup> S.P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985 (1957) and S. Ozment, *A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People*, London: Granta Publications, 2004



Turning to the field of advancement within the military, before 1800 in France this achieved through purchase and the highest positions were dominated by the court nobility. In Prussia this was also the case. The lowering of the pay by Frederick the Great de facto led to a property requirement for these functions. In England, influence with the Crown and Parliament were necessary for advancement and officers often also held seats in Parliament. Change towards a system based on seniority and merit occurred first in Prussia with the reforms of Scharnhorst, by introducing examinations as a prerequisite for promotion and by raising the pay of officers. In France, laws to reform the system of advancement were introduced in 1818 and 1832. Reform of the system of advancement in the British army happened much slower. A first step was the installation of the office of the Commander in Chief, a purely military and non-political head of the army. After this, examinations became more common for advancement, but there was also still a purchasing system. This was put in place deliberately so that the military would have the same interests as the ruling class, and a repetition of Cromwell would be evaded. It was the success of the Prussian army against France that convinced England to abolish its purchasing system in 1871.

Great change also occurred in the *content of military education* in the nineteenth century. This field was weakly developed until the nineteenth century and was divided into two parts. The first part concerned general military education and was meant for the training of officers of noble birth. This was taught at Louis XV's Ecole Militaire, established in 1751, Frederick the Great's Ritter Akademie, established in 1765, and the English naval school founded in 1729. The overall level of the students as well as the education in these institutions was weak. As military science itself was still only weakly developed (the seminal book *Vom Kriege* by Carl von Clausewitz was published in 1831), it was often combined with education that prepared for diplomatic service as in the Prussian Ritter Akademie. Education was also weak due to the aristocratic belief that military excellence was an inborn quality. Courage and honor rather than experience and professionalism were held to create military genius. The second type of educational institution was technical and meant for officers in the artillery and engineers. The quality of these schools varied, but was overall better than that of the former type.

The situation changed first in Prussia with the creation by Scharnhorst of the Kriegsakademie in 1810. Entry into this institution was difficult and the required subjects included tactics, military history, science of arms, field and permanent fortifications, military and political administration and economy, mathematics, artillery, special geography and geology, staff duty, and military jurisprudence. In 1859 still about 50 percent of Europe's military literature came from Germany. France's initial closest approximation was the staff school, Ecole d'Application d'Etat Major, established by St. Cyr in 1818, but the Ecole Militaire Supérieure, created in 1876 was its first true military academy. In England the school created in Greenwich in 1873 was the first to come to play a central role in the education of its army.

The final aspect of the modernization of the military we will look at here, concerns the field of *competence* and *esprit*. In the eighteenth century, it were aristocratic virtues like courage, genius, luxury and individualism that characterized military officers. They were 'amateurs' in the literal sense of the word, working in the military not as a specialized profession, but as a

fondness that was one part of the aristocratic lifestyle. Next to fine manners, sports and good living, it was an activity that came with social standing rather than being a fulltime profession. Within the army, social considerations penetrated every level, leading officers to defer to people of lower rank, but higher social status. In Prussia dueling between lower and higher ranking officers was not uncommon.

Change happened only moderately in England as aristocratic considerations continued to permeate the military, thereby hindering its development towards discipline, expertise and collectivism. In France too, the aristocratic grand geste ('beau sabreur') continued to undermine a collective spirit in favor of a rampant individualism. In Prussia however, reforms succeeded in transforming aristocratic notions and values into purely military ones by the middle of the nineteenth century. The aristocracy of birth was replaced by one of education and achievement.

According to Huntington, the weakly developed professionalization of the Japanese army in World War Two was a cause of its failures. Instead of an army focused on purely military principles, societal values permeated it. An aristocratic outlook, *bushido*, characterized the Japanese army rather than a professional one. General Araki stated that Japan was to:

... spread and glorify the Imperial way to the end of the Four Seas. Inadequacy of strength is not our worry. Why should we worry about that which is material?<sup>51</sup>

It was a firm belief in Japan that its material inferiority to other countries was overcome by the strength of its resolve and the divine mission of the Japanese people. Victory would come from the combination 'Japanese spirit, Western technology'. The Japanese military interfered with civilian matters and did not develop a professional ethos and a clear bureaucratic organization.<sup>52</sup>

To sum up, we can see how the process of bureaucratization, a typical aspect of the modern state, developed in the institution of the military. We see a formalization and professionalization of the military. Subjects and tasks are specialized and a monocratic order of hierarchy is established in the way that Max Weber described of modern bureaucracy. In the course of modernization, transformation occurs from a military organized around the values and principles of the aristocracy, to a military based on meritocracy and professionalism.

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<sup>51</sup> Quoted from S.P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, p. 127. He contrasts the Japanese with the experience of Germany where a professional army did develop. The central problem here was that of civic-military relations, shifting from the army interfering in politics (World War I) to a civilian ideology taken over and crushing the professional army (under the Nazis).

<sup>52</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan: 1853-1964*, New York: Modern Library, 2004, pp. 91-92

In the course of section C, we looked at whether modernization entails a universal development in the field of the state and its institutions. We saw that emanating from modern capitalism, the state becomes more complex, centralized and diversified. The national state comes to replace other types of states like city-states and empires. Within the national state, we saw that economic development is connected with a regulatory framework that protects property rights and that there is a tendency towards bureaucratization which we investigated more extensively with regard to the military. However, there are reasons to suspect that there also is a tension between the modern state and the modern economy. Although we have seen that the two are linked to each other, it is not entirely clear how the individual maximizing of the rationality of the market is related to the behavior of the modern state and its bureaucrats. Could it be that the regulatory framework that the market requires rests in something that is not modern? Moreover, how does the ethos of professionalism in the modern state relate to the openness and freedom of capitalist markets? These are questions we need to take up in the next chapter. In the next section, we will however first turn from the state to regime type. Does modernity entails a specific type of regime?

## **D). Political Regime**

### *Introduction*

From the state and its institutions, we will now turn to regime type.<sup>53</sup> Does the process of modernization entail a universal development towards a certain type of regime? Several authors have claimed that modernization implies a shift towards democracy. Within classical modernization theory, the earlier mentioned Daniel Lerner for instance, investigated how modernization in the Middle East would lead towards democratization. More recently, the belief in a universal directionality towards democracy, was also a central part of Francis Fukuyama's thesis of the End of History. The collapse of the Soviet Union was for him not just the fall of a specific regime in a country, but had world-historical meaning, as an important alternative to democracy was undermined. In this section, we will look at the evidence for the claim that there is a universal tendency towards democracy. We will look at how the regime of democracy spread to more countries throughout modern history to our contemporary situation. We will then look at how democracy fits in with other elements of the process of modernization we have identified. Here we will look at what the mechanism is that leads to democratization. In the final part of this section, we will look at the cases that provide evidence against the thesis that modernization entails democratization.

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<sup>53</sup> In political science a distinction is made between government, regime and state as three levels of political activity. Usually, regimes are more durable and engrained in a society than governments and states are again more stable and engrained than regimes. Governments change when for instance one president follows another or when a monarch abdicates in favor of his heir. A regime concerns the type of political organization ranging from monarchy to aristocracy and democracy. When in a coup a democratically elected leadership is removed, not only a government is changed, but also the regime. Finally, the state concerns the broader structures like bureaucratic organization or the level of centralization.

Before we can start our investigation, we need to clarify how we will understand the concept of democracy as it is widely used and its meaning is often contested. Democracies are contrasted with authoritarian regimes that include all other forms of rule, whether it concerns monarchical rule or rule by a small group of a certain class or by military officers. However, making a clear-cut distinction between the democracy and authoritarianism is not easy. If we define democracy through the presence of universal elections, like in Joseph Schumpeter's famous definition of democracy as "a competitive struggle for the people's vote", this still leaves much difficulty. A country can hold elections, but still brutally repress a minority or even a large part of its population. It would be incorrect to put such country in the same category as a peaceful country that respects the civil rights of all of its inhabitants. Furthermore, if elections are held, questions can still be raised concerning the fairness of elections, the requirements a country has for being eligible to hold office or the influence that certain politicians have through for instance ownership of the media. Moreover, certain practices concerning the democratic system in one country, can be illegal or strictly regulated in another, like the extent of the use of funds for election campaigns.

A way around these problems is by conceptualizing democracy not as a single factor that can be present or not, but by placing it on a continuum that moves from authoritarianism to full-fledged democracy.<sup>54</sup> In between these two poles stands the basic electoral democracy as defined by Schumpeter. In these countries fair and open elections are held frequently, but they may still exclude or repress parts of their population. Between electoral democracies and authoritarian regimes stand what has been called 'pseudodemocracies', countries where elections are held but their openness and fairness is limited. This not only holds for engineered elections, but also countries which have a dominant party, like Mexico had under the PRI for several decades after its civil war or Singapore under the PAP. At the other far end of the spectrum stands liberal democracy, where elections are not only fair and open, but the civil liberties of the population are enshrined in the constitution and protected.

### *The Spread of Democracy*

Democracy has roots that can be traced back to pre-modern times. Influences emanated from the religious sphere. In the Old Testament for example, the people abdicates kingship and directly makes its covenant with God. The idea of the equality of all before God was an important source for the modern democratic idea of equality. Moreover, Michael Walzer has shown how many modern peoples revolutions found inspiration in the Biblical idea of the covenant.<sup>55</sup> The consent of the people that later specifically in Protestantism was needed for the election of religious leaders was also a source of democratization.

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<sup>54</sup> For this typology see L. Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999

<sup>55</sup> M. Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution*, New York: Basic Books, 1985 In chapter V, where we will look at how modernity and tradition are mixed, we will return to this more extensively.

Antiquity was another source for modern democracy. Although most of the Greek philosophers did not have a high esteem of democracy, they did provide the conceptual framework for it and in Athens and Rome some democratic practices were implemented. Although Antiquity did have an idea of government by the people, it did not acknowledge the rights of individuals.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, it excluded women, slaves and other categories of people.

Sources for democracy can also be found in feudalism. Systems of local political representation can be traced far back. The Icelandic parliament, which is the oldest still existing parliament, was founded in the tenth century. In England, the Magna Charta of 1215 limited the power of monarchs and established certain freedoms. When the Netherlands revolted against Spain, they argued that the freedom and consultation that they demanded had existed for centuries and were common practices since the Middle Ages.

In the seventeenth century, we see an initial stronger movement towards democracy. In the English Revolution, democratic ideals played a role. The Fundamental Orders of Connecticut of 1638 have been called the ‘first written constitution of modern democracy’. However, the impact of these developments on the political landscape remained limited.

Democracy first burst out on to the political arena with the American and French Revolutions. In these revolutions, government was grounded in the will of the people. In the Declaration of Independence of the United States the assertion that all men are created equal was enshrined. The French Revolution did away with the special prerogatives of the aristocracy and proclaimed “liberty, equality and fraternity”. However, in both cases still little democratic practices were instituted. The American political system was initially designed to be republican rather democratic and excluded a large group of the population from politics. The French Revolution ended in the terror of Robespierre and the rise of Napoleon. It was in the course of the nineteenth century that democratic institutions and procedures began to spread. Elected parliaments were installed, the franchise was broadened and executives were held more accountable. Initially, democracy was pitted against traditional regimes, specifically monarchies. In the course of the twentieth century, other forms of regime challenged democracy.

In the early twentieth century, fascism swept away the democratic institutions of Germany and Italy and reversed the liberalization that was happening in Japan. After the Second World War, these countries turned democratic, but then communist authoritarianism emerged as a major competitor to democracy, sweeping from the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe and parts of the developing world. In the nineteen-seventies, the authoritarian regimes of southern Europe, in Spain, Portugal and Greece were replaced with democratic politics. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequently the Soviet Union, democracy again spread further.

So throughout history we see a steady progression of democratization. Before the nineteenth century, there were no full-fledged modern democracies. At the beginning of the nineteen-

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<sup>56</sup> J.E.E.D. Acton, *The History of Freedom*, Ottawa and Grand Rapids: The Acton Institute, 1993 (1877), pp. 49-53

seventies, there were about forty democracies in the world and by 1995 there were as many as 117.

What does our contemporary situation look like? We can create a picture of this through the data collected by Freedom House. Yearly, this organization ranks all the countries of the world along an index of democracy, looking both at political and at civil freedom. As in our approach here, democracy is placed on a continuum from not-free to free countries. A country with a score of 7 is un-free and a country with a score of 1 is free. In the rankings over the last decades, we can see a trend towards democratization. In 1973, out of a 151 countries 29% were categorized as “free” countries by Freedom House, 25% as “partly free” and 46% as “not free”. In 2009, out of a total of 193 countries, 46% was ranked as “free”, 32% as “partly free” and only 29% as “not free”.<sup>57</sup> On the next graph, Freedom House’s ranking for 2009 is depicted.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> See: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fiw09/CompHistData/CountryStatus&RatingsOverview1973-2009.pdf> last accessed on 15-07-2011

<sup>58</sup> From: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/Chart116File163.pdf>

## Combined Average Ratings – Independent Countries

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<b>FREE</b>	Japan	Sierra Leone	
	Latvia	Turkey	
	Monaco		
<b>1.0</b>	Panama	<b>3.5</b>	<b>NOT FREE</b>
Andorra	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Bosnia-Herzegovina	<b>5.5</b>
Australia	South Korea	East Timor	Algeria
Austria	Taiwan	Guatemala	Angola
Bahamas		Kenya	Azerbaijan
Barbados		Liberia	Bhutan
Belgium		Madagascar	Brunei
Canada	<b>2.0</b>	Moldova	Cambodia
Cape Verde	Antigua and Barbuda	Niger	Congo (Brazzaville)
Chile	Argentina	Philippines	Congo (Kinshasa)
Costa Rica	Benin	Solomon Islands	Egypt
Cyprus	Botswana	Tanzania	Guinea
Czech Republic	Brazil	Zambia	Kazakhstan
Denmark	Croatia		Maldives
Dominica	Dominican Republic	<b>4.0</b>	Oman
Estonia	Mauritius	Burkina Faso	Pakistan
Finland	Mongolia	Comoros	Qatar
France	Namibia	Georgia	Russia
Germany	Romania	Guinea-Bissau	Rwanda
Hungary	Samoa	Kuwait	Tajikistan
Iceland	Sao Tome and Principe	Malawi	United Arab Emirates
Ireland	South Africa	Malaysia	
Italy	Suriname	Mauritania	
Kiribati	Trinidad and Tobago	Nigeria	<b>6.0</b>
Liechtenstein	Vanuatu	Sri Lanka	Cameroon
Lithuania		Tonga	Cote d'Ivoire
Luxembourg		Venezuela	Iran
Malta	<b>2.5</b>		Iraq
Marshall Islands	El Salvador		Swaziland
Micronesia	Guyana	<b>4.5</b>	Tunisia
Nauru	India	Armenia	Vietnam
Netherlands	Indonesia	Bangladesh	
New Zealand	Jamaica	Burundi	
Norway	Lesotho	The Gambia	<b>6.5</b>
Palau	Mali	Haiti	Belarus
Poland	Mexico	Jordan	Chad
Portugal	Peru	Kyrgyzstan	China
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Senegal	Lebanon	Equatorial Guinea
Saint Lucia	Serbia	Morocco	Eritrea
San Marino	Ukraine	Nepal	Laos
Slovakia		Singapore	Saudi Arabia
Slovenia		Uganda	Syria
Spain	<b>PARTLY FREE</b>		Zimbabwe
Sweden		<b>5.0</b>	
Switzerland		Afghanistan	<b>7.0</b>
Tuvalu	<b>3.0</b>	Bahrain	Burma
United Kingdom	Albania	Central African Republic	Cuba
United States	Bolivia		Libya
Uruguay	Colombia		North Korea
	Ecuador		Somalia
<b>1.5</b>	Honduras		Sudan
Belize	Macedonia		Turkmenistan
Bulgaria	Montenegro		Uzbekistan
Ghana	Mozambique		
Greece	Nicaragua		
Grenada	Papua New Guinea		
Israel	Paraguay		
	Seychelles		

So we can conclude that there is a historical tendency towards democratization. Is it part of the process of modernization? If so, is it connected with the other developments we have described in previous section? The most important link that has been argued for, and that has been defended in Modernization Theory is between democracy and income level.

An early assertion of this relationship was presented by Seymour Martin Lipset in an article of 1959.<sup>59</sup> He argued that a high level of economic development creates the possibility to maintain a democracy: “the more well-to-do a nation, the greater its chances to sustain democracy”. And in his elaborate study of the different roads that countries have taken in modernity toward democracy and dictatorship, Barrington Moore Jr. states: “No bourgeois, no democracy”.<sup>60</sup> Larry Diamond argues that economic wealth is not a sufficient condition for the creation of democracy. Other factors also play an important role, but a high level of economic development does sustain a democracy. Wealth does not create democracy, but it makes it endure.<sup>61</sup> If we look at the countries that have the highest ranking in terms of freedom on Freedom House’s list on the last page, we see that all the countries that have a score of 1 are countries with high levels of GDP per capita. Conversely, the least free countries, scoring 7, all are relatively poorer countries with Libya and Cuba being the most wealthy of the not free countries.

If we make regional comparisons, the picture is similar. For GDP per capita levels a list made by the Economist is presented on the next page. Looking at Eastern Europe, the countries that are ranked most free ( level 1,0) by Freedom House are also the more wealthy countries in the region: Slovenia (\$18,650), the Czech Republic (\$14,020), Hungary (\$11,180) and Poland (\$8,800). Countries with a lower GDP per capita in the region also have lower scores on Freedom House’s ranking: Romania (2,0), Ukraine (2,5), Albania (3,0), Moldova (3,5) and Belarus (6,5). If we turn to East Asia, we see the same pattern. The countries with the highest level of GDP per capita, Japan (\$34,080), South Korea (\$18,500) and Taiwan (\$15,990) have the highest score for freedom (1,5) in the region. Less economically developed countries score lower in terms of freedom: Philippines (3,5), Malaysia (4,0), and Vietnam (6,0).

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<sup>59</sup> S.M. Lipset, *Some Social Requisites to Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy*, American Political Science Review, 53 (March 1959)

<sup>60</sup> B. Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Harmondsworth and Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1969 (1966), p. 418

<sup>61</sup> L. Diamond, *Developing Democracy*



## Living standards

### Highest GDP per head

\$, 2006

1 Luxembourg	87,490	36 Guadeloupe <sup>b</sup>	23,880
2 Norway	72,810	37 Cyprus	23,430
3 Bermuda <sup>ac</sup>	68,180	38 Aruba <sup>ab</sup>	22,810
4 Qatar	59,570	Martinique <sup>b</sup>	22,810
5 Iceland	54,400	40 Bahrain <sup>b</sup>	22,620
6 Ireland	52,410	41 Israel	20,660
7 Switzerland	52,110	42 Bahamas <sup>a</sup>	20,130
8 Denmark	50,990	43 Puerto Rico <sup>a</sup>	18,720
9 United States	43,730	44 Slovenia	18,650
10 Channel Islands <sup>ab</sup>	49,680	45 Portugal	18,550
11 Cayman Islands <sup>ac</sup>	43,090	46 South Korea	18,500
12 Sweden	42,180	47 Réunion <sup>b</sup>	18,230
13 Netherlands	40,380	48 Taiwan	15,990
14 Finland	39,750	49 Malta	15,940
United Kingdom	39,750	50 Equatorial Guinea	15,860
16 Austria	39,270	51 New Caledonia <sup>ad</sup>	15,070
17 Andorra <sup>ab</sup>	39,010	52 Guam <sup>ab</sup>	14,620
Canada	39,010	53 Virgin Islands (US) <sup>ac</sup>	14,470
19 Australia	38,260	54 Czech Republic	14,020
20 Belgium	37,890	55 Trinidad & Tobago	13,950
21 France	37,040	56 Saudi Arabia	13,850
22 Kuwait	36,460	57 French Polynesia <sup>ae</sup>	13,620
23 Faroe Islands <sup>ab</sup>	36,170	58 Estonia	12,620
24 Germany	35,030	59 Netherlands Antilles <sup>ac</sup>	12,610
25 Japan	34,080	60 Barbados	12,340
26 Italy	31,860	61 Oman <sup>b</sup>	11,860
27 Brunei	31,420	62 Hungary	11,180
28 Macau	31,340	63 Slovakia	10,190
29 Greenland <sup>ab</sup>	30,360	64 Croatia	9,330
30 Singapore	30,040	65 Chile	8,840
31 Spain	28,220	66 Poland	8,800
32 Greece	27,790	67 Latvia	8,750
33 United Arab Emirates <sup>b</sup>	27,600	Lithuania	8,750
34 Hong Kong	26,730	69 Libya	8,390
35 New Zealand	25,490	70 Mexico	7,750

### Lowest GDP per head

\$, 2006

1 Burundi	120	11 Zimbabwe <sup>b</sup>	260
2 Congo-Kinshasa	140	12 Afghanistan	270
3 Ethiopia	170	Rwanda	270
4 Guinea-Bissau	190	14 Madagascar	290
Liberia	190	Somalia <sup>a</sup>	290
6 Myanmar	230	16 Gambia, The	320
7 Eritrea	240	Nepal	320
Malawi	240	Uganda	320
9 Niger	250	19 Tanzania	330
Sierra Leone	250	20 Mozambique	340

a Estimate. b 2005 c 2004 d 2003 e 2002

If we look at the Economist's ranking above, except for Qatar, all the countries in the top 20 are democracies. Looking at the countries with the lowest level of GDP per capita, few of them have had long-lasting democratic rule. Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi conducted extensive quantitative research for the period of 1950 to 1990. According to their data GDP levels correlate with the resilience of democracy. In a country with a GDP per

capita lower than \$1,500, democracy had a life expectancy of less than eight years. Between \$1,500 and \$3,000 it lasted about eighteen years and above \$6,000, democracy was highly resilient.<sup>62</sup>

If there is indeed a global tendency towards democracy and it goes together with economic development, what explains this correlation? What is this dynamic that is part of universal modernization?

Central in this development is the rise of the middle class. We saw already that Barrington Moore Jr. linked democracy to the bourgeoisie. It is the middle class that is the underpinning for a working modern democracy. The development of the middle class creates a large group of people in new professions that are not tied to the state or traditional patterns of authority, giving them an impetus to challenge a closed polity. High economic development also gives them the resources to do this. This concerns material resources like money, but also 'human capital'. We saw in section B that economic development goes together with a rise in the literacy rate and the general level of education. This in turn is one of the most important factors that leads to a change in social attitudes which underpins democracy. Robert Inglehart has extensively investigated this mechanism. He argues that it is not economic development by itself that creates democracy. Rather it facilitates a change from 'survival values' to 'self-expression values'. The latter values then create the conditions for a working democracy.<sup>63</sup> The educated middle class has the capacity to engage the state in negotiation and demand accountability from it. In section C, we saw that modern states require much vaster resources and support from their populations than traditional polities, and in response to this, civilians demand more influence over their states. In Huntington's study of what he called 'the third wave of democratization', which started in 1974 with the fall of Caetano in Portugal, he states:

Third wave movements for democratization were not led by landlords, peasants, or (apart from Poland) industrial workers. In virtually every country the most active supporters of democratization came from the urban middle class.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> F. Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*, p. 69

<sup>63</sup> R. Inglehart, C. Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005

<sup>64</sup> S.P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993, p. 67

### *Exceptions to Democratization*

When comparing the list of per capita GDP levels with the list of freedom scores we saw a broad pattern of correlation, but we also saw notable exceptions. We encountered a group of countries with very high scores in terms of GDP per capita, but which still had very low levels of political and civic freedom. This concerned in the first place several countries in the Middle East. Qatar, for instance, ranked fourth in terms of GDP per capita, but is ranked as 'not free' by Freedom House (with a score of 5,5). Also countries like the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have very high levels of wealth, but they at the same time have closed political systems that do not seem to be democratizing. Another exception to our thesis is Singapore, which also has a very high level of wealth, but which is not a democracy. On the other end of the scale, there is one notable exception of a country with a very low level of per capita wealth, but at the same time a long legacy of well functioning democracy, ( and classified as 'free' by Freedom House with a score of 2,5): India.

The case of India is interesting and we will examine it more extensively in the next chapter, but it does not challenge the dynamic we have argued for here. We did not argue the strong case of 'no bourgeois, no democracy', but instead that economic wealth maintains democracy. This does not preclude the existence of democracy in countries with low levels of development like India, but it just makes their existence challenging and hence less likely. The Middle Eastern countries do seem to propose a challenge to the theory that associates high levels of wealth with democracy. However, by looking beyond GDP per capita levels and turning to the dynamic we described of wealth leading to democracy, these exceptions can be accounted for. Although income levels are high, the thread of development or causal dynamic described above that leads to the creation of democracy, has been severed in these countries.

It was the application of modern science and technology and the development of capitalist economics that led to the creation of the middle class that in turn becomes an independent force vis-à-vis the state, which leads to democratization.

In these Middle Eastern countries however, the high level of wealth is based on natural resources, specifically oil and natural gas. These resources are in turn controlled by the state and hence make the generated income dependent on the state. This makes it difficult for a wealthy independent class of citizens to emerge that has the capacity to challenge the state. As wealth depends on the exploitation of natural resources by the state, it does not come primarily from a process in which the population becomes more highly educated and entrepreneurial. The polity is controlled by political rents rather than Inglehart's 'self-expression'. Acquiring modern products and services is done with the revenues from natural resources rather than an autonomous development of the population. The high level of income in these countries thus does not follow the pattern described in this section and hence does not lead to the process of modernization. These countries, but also countries in other parts of the world, suffer from the so-called 'resource curse'. Although natural resources seem like a blessing as a powerful source of income, they can impede the development of a country. By

contrast, the countries with the best record in terms of modernization and overall development in recent decades, like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, are actually very poorly endowed with natural resources. Education, entrepreneurial skills and hard work were necessary to generate growth in these countries. According to our dynamic, modern states have to make larger demands on their populations for their funding and this initiates a process of negotiation. In Western history this was caught in the slogan “no taxation, without representation”. Resource-rich states do not require large taxation demands on their populations, but they are thus also not forced to grant them representation. These exceptions thus show that it is not wealth per se that leads to democratization, but that it comes from the whole causal dynamic described in this section.

The other example of a country that has modernized and generated high levels of wealth without becoming a democracy is Singapore. The causes of this are complex and include the small size of the country in comparison with its neighbors as well as the international conflict between capitalist and communist forces that have made the state more powerful against the population in Singapore. However, it is important to note that even this country is changing. Throughout the nineties, its former leader Lee Kuan Yew has been an adamant critique of democracy which according to him does not fit with ‘Asian values’. In recent years, his attitude has changed and even he admitted that his country, in time, will become more democratic.<sup>65</sup>

There is another phenomenon we need to address and which seems to contradict the causal dynamic we have described. The dynamic we have elaborated on states that at low levels of economic development countries have a very hard time to maintain a democratic polity and authoritarian regimes often thrive. On a high level of economic development practically all countries will be ruled democratically. In between these two levels is a transition phase and we need to look more closely at this because there is evidence to suggest that the correlation between economic growth and political openness need not be linear. Indeed, some of the most repressive regimes of our time have a relatively high level of industrialization like North Korea and Myanmar. Also in contemporary China, we see that the middle classes are actually more supportive of the ruling Communist Party and its authoritarian system than the lower classes. The two great challenges to democracy in the twentieth century, fascism and communism, also took root in relatively developed countries. Both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany fell into this middle transition group. Moreover, it is clear that the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century extensively used modern technology. This type of authoritarian regime can thus not be qualified as pre-modern.

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<sup>65</sup> Interview with Fareed Zakaria in *Foreign Affairs* F. Zakaria, ‘Culture is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew’ in *Foreign Affairs*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, vol. 73, nov-dec 1994, pp. 189-194

It seems that the process of modernization in the long run tends towards democratization, but in its early phases, as it breaks down the old order, the situation can be very volatile and authoritarian forms of regime can emerge.<sup>66</sup>

One explanation for this phenomenon presented by Fareed Zakaria is the weakness and lack of independence of the middle class. The United States and England for instance had a strong entrepreneurial class that was relatively independent of the state or traditional classes (these even being absent in the United States). By contrast, the German bourgeoisie was dependent on and absorbed in the state, leading it to fuse with the traditional ruling classes. Instead of challenging the established order and establish an open political order, they conspired with the old order.<sup>67</sup> In this explanation, authoritarianism in a modernizing society is caused by the middle class being co-opted by another societal group. This cannot be a sufficient explanation, because the middle class can, under certain circumstances, itself be inclined towards authoritarianism.

Although we have now focused on the association between economic development and democracy, the theory that the modern middle class can be supportive of authoritarian politics goes back into the nineteenth century. Karl Marx stated that the bourgeoisie attacked the old aristocratic order and seeking political openness, but became conservative and supported monarchical oppression when the labor classes sought more power.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Mikhail Bakunin called the bourgeois revolution half-hearted because it fought feudalism in the name of liberty, but seeks refuge with despotic monarchs when the masses seek liberty.<sup>69</sup> Other authors have discerned comparable dynamics of a middle class inclined to authoritarianism in an early phase of modernization<sup>70</sup>, and it received particular interest due to developments in Latin America in the third quarter of the twentieth century. In this period, in several countries like Brazil, Argentina and Chile, a military coup overthrew a democratically elected government. In these cases the military was aligned with the business elite. The coup came after the 'easy phases of industrialization' were completed and an inclusive system became more difficult to achieve.<sup>71</sup> As a consequence of rapid industrialization, by midcentury these

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<sup>66</sup> As Samuel Huntington argued: "modernity creates stability, but modernization creates instability", *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 41

<sup>67</sup> F. Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom*, pp. 62-66

<sup>68</sup> K. Marx, 'Die 18. Brumaire des Ludwig Bonaparte' pp. 95-7, in *Marx und Engels: Ausgewählte Werke*, Moskau: Verlag Progress, 1987, pp. 90-170

<sup>69</sup> M. Bakunin, *God and the State*, New York: Dover Publications, 1970 (1882), pp. 81-84

<sup>70</sup> B. Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. He describes next to the capitalist and the communist revolutions a third development model based on a coalition between the bureaucracy and the wealthy classes against the labor class and peasants. See also A. Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962

<sup>71</sup> G.A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics*, Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1973, pp. 57-67

countries had a large urban working class that translated politically in a powerful populist mobilization. It was a movement against the old oligarchs, powerful foreign firms and their free trade policy, and instead sought for industrialization and the protection of the domestic market. Prominent pro-labor leftist regimes were those of Juan Peron in Argentina, Getulio Vargas in Brazil and Salvador Allende in Chile. Against this powerful political movement a competing 'technocratic' coalition was formed between the military, the bureaucracy and the middle class. In several Latin American countries they assumed power through military intervention, what Jose Nun has dubbed 'the middle class coup'.<sup>72</sup> Examples of this phenomenon are the coups in Brazil and Argentina in 1964 and 1966 respectively, and by August Pinochet in Chile.

Democracy works best when income inequality is not very high. When in the early phases of modernization a certain class grows rich fast, inequality rises strongly, pitting a wealthy urban minority against a poor urban and rural majority and leading to radical shifts in politics, in which the wealthier strata can come to support coups. The Gini-index is a measure of income inequality in countries. Latin America and South East Asia are two regions with some of the highest income inequality levels, which helps explain the pendulum in these regions between leftist populist regimes on the one hand and 'bureaucratic authoritarianism' or 'middle class coups' on the other.

Overall, we see a pattern of countries with low per capita GDP levels having difficulty maintaining a democracy.<sup>73</sup> In the transition phase, politics can be very volatile and the middle class may come to support dictatorship. A small or relatively weak middle class in fear of labor and peasant organizations, can support authoritarian military-backed regimes. At a high level of economic development, when a large part of the population has become middle class, the middle class is an unambiguous force of democratization.

## **E). A Total Package of Modernization**

In the previous sections we looked at whether a universal development could be discerned in four different fields: economics, socio-demographics, the state and regime type. In all of them we saw that there was a directionality inherent in the process of modernization. So how are these different fields related? Are there mechanisms that relate these fields together to create an overarching process of modernization? Do the developments in these fields follow a set

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<sup>72</sup> J. Nun, 'The Middle-Class Military Coup', in: C. Veliz (ed.), *The Politics of Conformity in Latin America*, London: Oxford University Press for Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1967, pp. 66-118

<sup>73</sup> We noted that the strength of democracy in a poor country like India does not disprove the thesis we are discussing here. However, it is an interesting issue that needs to be explained. The case of India points towards other sources of democracy, non-modern sources, that we will look at in the next chapter.

pattern or can they move separately? Another question we need to ask is: What are the central drivers behind the process of modernization? Are there factors that provide a central impetus to the changes we described in these different fields?

First we will turn to the question whether the processes of modernization occurring in these different fields are related to each other. In the course of our investigation we already came across a few connections.

We saw that the changes happening in the field of economics (section A) are related to those in socio-demographics (B). In the economy, we saw the spreading of capitalism, which implies a movement through different stages. The economy moves from a focus on agriculture towards industry and services. This process entails the socio-demographic development of urbanization. Industrialization and the service sector lead people to live together in more densely populated areas. The labor required for factory work draws people to the cities. Similarly, the economic shift to industry and services is connected with the socio-demographic development of the increase in literacy rate. Modern work is one of the reasons why modern schooling is required. Finally, the economic transformation is also connected with the change in the demographic composition of a society. The large extended family was required for work in agriculture. The drop in fertility rates corresponds to the different economy of living in industrial cities.

The changes in economics (A) and socio-demographics (B) also were related to the formation of the modern state (C). The central driver for the centralization and standardization of the state that is typical of modernity, was a growth in interdependence. This in turn came from rise of capitalism and the growth of commercial trade in cities. The state institutions that protected private property were also an important driver of economic growth. Furthermore, the demographic developments of urbanization and the growth of literacy required more complex and formal procedures and led to an increase in regulations, contracts and other paperwork, which all required the state to develop an extensive and professional bureaucracy.

There are also connections between changes in regime type (D) and those in the other three fields of economics (A), socio-demographics (B) and the modern state (C). We saw that there is a particularly strong connection between capitalism and democracy. At a certain level of economic development, a large middle class is created, which is a force of democratization. But we also saw that the growth in literacy and the level of education also fosters democratization. Finally, the process of modern state creation is also connected with democratization. The modern state regulates and administers its population as well as requires taxation from the population to pay for its increased activity.

The developments that we distinguished in four different fields are thus tied together. Through different channels, they are connected to each other and mutually reinforce each other. We can conclude that there is something like a 'total package' of modernization, that across a range of fields leads to a transformation of country as it modernizes.

This is not to say that the different changes always happen together, that they develop in the same order or at the same pace. They are all broad tendencies inherent in modernization that have complex links with each other and which can reinforce each other, but due to circumstances or policies, certain fields can be very developed, while others lag.

We for instance saw that countries can have high per capita income (A) without being democracies (D). This is the case with countries that suffer from the resource curse. In these countries, an authoritarian elite can distribute rents from its resources, creating a wealthy population that is dependent on this elite and will be less motivated to oppose it. Moreover, in many cases, a vibrant and durable democracy follows after a period of long economic growth, like in the case of many East Asian countries. Countries can of course be democratic at low levels of economic development, but democracy tends to become more lasting if its population consists mostly of an urbanized and educated middle class.

A country can also be far developed on socio-demographic indicators (B), while lagging in economic development (A) and state formation (C). This is a pattern more common in Latin America. Most of these countries are highly urbanized, have relatively high levels of literacy and fertility rates have gone down. This is the result of strong industrialization already in the early decades of the twentieth century. However, due to bad policies this has not resulted in a high level of economic development. Argentina for instance, had in the nineteen-forties a per capita income comparable to that of Western Europe, but has since fallen behind.<sup>74</sup> Apart from bad policies, the weak institutionalization of the state was also an impediment to economic development in these countries. It led to factionalism and high levels of corruption. Something similar applies for Russia. It is also highly urbanized and literate, and in terms of demographic composition, fertility rates are lower than in many developed countries and are already leading to a shrinking of the population. Yet due to policies and a weakly institutionalized state, its economic development does not match its socio-demographic development.

Overall, the different fields of modernization are correlated with each other. Through cross-links, there is an overall directionality, but they do not always move in the same way and central fields can lag others.

Now that we have discussed the relations between the modernization in different fields, we can turn to the question of the central drivers of these developments. Are there several independent factors that drive these different changes or can we identify certain more central factors in the process of modernization?

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<sup>74</sup> This development is documented in V. Tanzi, *Argentina: An Economic Chronicle: How one of the richest countries of the world lost its wealth*, New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2007. In *Falling Behind* the authors describe this same development for Latin America as a whole. F. Fukuyama (ed.), *Falling Behind: Explaining the Development Gap Between Latin America and the United States*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008



We saw that changes in the field of economics were important for modernization in all three other fields. Capitalist development fosters urbanization and increased literacy. Capitalism is a force in the centralization and bureaucratization of the state. Finally, capitalism creates middle classes that demand democracy.

Capitalism in turn is strongly driven by modern technology. When we discussed the stages of economic growth, we saw that the transformations that occur in this process, were driven by an increase in productivity that broke through the ceiling of productivity growth that characterized traditional societies. This increased productivity came from 'Newtonian' technology. The economic development of industrialization depends on this technology and its production methods in the factory. It is the development of this technology that creates the new markets of capitalism. Modern technology also impacts the other fields of modernization directly. It was the increased living standards, in the form of better sanitation, hygiene and medication that initiated the global explosive increase in population. It was also the development of new weapons that changed the character and costs of warfare. This in turn fostered the creation of the modern state. The bureaucratic control of technology displaced the aristocratic way of warfare and opened the door to the producing and consuming middle classes that demanded democracy.

This does not mean that modern technology is the only driver of modernization. We have seen how the process is much more complex than that. It does show that modern technology has a special and central role in the diverse unfolding of modernity. It is also for Francis Fukuyama the factor that initiates the directionality in history, which together with the struggle for recognition leads to capitalist democracy as the End of History.

In the course of this investigation we will also build further on this central role of modern technology. In chapter IV, we will look at what the process of modernization implies for the human condition. There we will argue that modern technology goes together with a certain way of relating to the world and self that is characterized by detachment, and which transforms the world into 'Technopolis'.

### *Still at the End of History*

In the course of this chapter we have seen that there something like a universal directionality in the process of modernization. In different fields we have seen developments that interlock to create a total package of modernization. This means that the basic claim of Modernization Theory and its recent version, Francis Fukuyama's thesis of the End of History, is correct. Nevertheless, the thesis has been widely criticized over the years and several visions of our contemporary world have been developed as alternatives for the *End of History*. Here we will look at the most prominent forms of critique of the thesis and on the basis of our investigation thus far, we will show how they miss their mark. Furthermore, we will sketch in which way we will criticize the project of Modernization Theory and the thesis of the End of History. The other forms of critique fail to undermine this thesis, because they do not question its

underlying assumptions and core concepts. They argue from the same conceptual framework as Modernization Theory, and specifically its view of human nature, which cannot adequately capture the human condition in modernity. Developing an alternative framework will be the task of this investigation in subsequent chapters.

What are the alternatives that have been developed by Fukuyama's critics? The most prominent response to the *End of History* was Samuel Huntington's argument of the *Clash of Civilizations*, published in 1996 as a book.<sup>75</sup> He argues that the ideological clash between capitalism and communism has indeed ended, but this opens a new fault line in global order. Conflict in the world will in the future derive from differences between civilizations. Benjamin Barber in his 1995 book argued that there is a different type of dialectic emerging.<sup>76</sup> On the one hand, are the forces capitalism, which he calls McWorld, which lead to a cosmopolitan, individualist, but also irresponsible world. This is opposed to what he calls Jihad, which represents not just Islamic radicalism, but all other forms of strong community that are opposed to McWorld. Kishore Mahbubani argued in *The New Asian Hemisphere*, that Fukuyama wrongly believed that Asian countries would become 'carbon copies' of the West.<sup>77</sup> Instead, Asia will develop along its own lines and the world will revert back to a situation of Asian preeminence, which was the normal situation from the year 0 up to 1800 AD.

In what way do these alternative visions differ from the thesis of the End of History and how do the arguments hold up the what we have developed so far? A line of argumentation that we find in all these three authors is that capitalism can be disconnected from democracy. As such, they go against the argument we made in section D.

Benjamin Barber for instance, argues that after the fall of communism, we have seen a global spreading of capitalism, but not so much of democracy. In Russia, capitalism is spreading quickly, but its democratic institutions have been less vigorous. More importantly, China has radically embraced capitalism, but seems to be capable of doing this without democratizing. However, this does not contradict the argument we have developed. What we have argued is that there is a long-term connection between capitalism and democracy. If through economic growth, a large middle class develops, this class will demand democratization. In both China and Russia this logic has not yet worked out yet. China's level of per capita development is still far lower. It is in the transition phase, in which we saw that the new middle class can support authoritarianism. Russia too as yet lacks a strong middle class basis and much of its wealth comes from the state through the distribution of natural resource wealth. Only if China

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<sup>75</sup> S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: And the Remaking of World Order*, London: The Free Press, 2002 (1997)

<sup>76</sup> B. Barber, *Jihad versus McWorld: Terrorism's Challenge to Democracy*, New York: Ballantine Books, 2001 (1995)

<sup>77</sup> K. Mahbubani, *The New Asian hemisphere: The irresistible shift of global power to the East*, New York: PublicAffairs Books, 2008

and Russia would manage to become middle class societies without (further) democratizing, would it constitute a case against the argument of Modernization Theory.

Mahbubani criticizes the West's insistence on democratization and the protection of human rights in Asia. He argues that Asian societies must find their own way instead of following the West's blueprint. He does embrace the adoption of many of the aspects of modernization as we developed them as what he calls the 'seven pillars of Western wisdom', to which he counts a free-market economy, the application of science and technology, meritocracy and the rule of law. He does not include democracy in this list. However, he does not reject it either. He argues that the West took a long time to implement democratic institutions and that countries like China should not be pushed to rush into democratization. Moreover, although he insists that Asian societies should find their own way, he does not show what an alternative to democracy in Asia would look like or how Asia differs from the West.

Samuel Huntington does put forth a theory of the way in which the West differs from other societies. He argues that economic modernization does spread globally, but that the liberal and democratic politics of the West can be disentangled from economic modernization. Western democracy is not connected with modernization and has source which are independent of it and which predate modernization. Factors like the separation between spiritual and temporal power, Roman law, social pluralism, representative bodies and individualism preceded modernity in the West and will hence not come together with a spreading of modernization to other parts of the globe. Moreover, an embrace of Western principles is most likely in weak and defeated societies, that are strongly in need of reform, like the Turkey of Kemal 'Ataturk', which radically implemented Western principles after the fall of the Ottoman empire. If a country gets more developed, it will have less need to copy others and will become more proud of its indigenous traditions and reject Westernization. However, if we look at our argument of section D, we can actually see a reverse pattern. Many countries, in their early stages of development, rejected democracy and had authoritarian capitalist systems, like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Chile and Indonesia. It was when countries became middle class societies that we saw that they democratized. Outside of the West, we saw this development in countries of different civilizations: in Latin America (Chile), in Japan, in Sinic countries (Taiwan, South Korea) and in orthodox countries (Greece). Moreover, in another of his works, Samuel Huntington argued that although religion can be a cause of democratization, economic development is another, acknowledging the argument of Modernization Theory.<sup>78</sup>

A second type of argument can be found in Benjamin Barber, and to an extent in Samuel Huntington, and concerns the rejection of the universal spreading of both capitalism and democracy. This argument holds that a new fault line has emerged with radical Islam. We saw that according to Huntington, democracy does not necessarily spread to other civilizations. The world of Islam, situated at the border of several other civilization, has particularly 'bloody borders'. Benjamin Barber sees radical Islam as an example of the dialectical force

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<sup>78</sup> S. P. Huntington, *The Third Wave*

opposing individualism and commercialism. So does radical Islam pose a challenge to liberal democracy in the way that fascism and communism did? The issue concerning the End of History is not about whether there are people that oppose liberal democracy, but whether some kind of viable alternative ordering of society exists. Radical Islam has staged several terrorist attacks, but according to Fukuyama they represent acts of desperation, rather than a viable alternative.<sup>79</sup> Outside of Afghanistan, Islamist terrorists have not developed an alternative social model. Due to the extremely low level of development of the country, its societal model has not spread to other parts of the Islamic world. Islamic movements did take control of Iran in 1979. Although the regime is oppressive, it does profess to be a 'guided democracy' and its economic model is not radically different from those of other resource producers in the Middle East. Moreover, in many other parts of the Islamic world, like Turkey, Egypt and Algeria, Islamic movements have organized themselves as political parties working through the parliamentary system. Hence, Islamic radicalism does seem to propose an alternative to liberal democracy and stop the spreading of universal modernization.

The problem with all these critiques of Fukuyama's thesis of the End of History, is that they argue for an alternative for the spreading of modernity. Yet as we have seen in the section A to ID, a distinct pattern of universal development that works across different fields, can be discerned. We saw that there is indeed something like a universal process of modernization. However, what these critics are correct in hinting at, is that there is a problem inherent to the process of modernization. They show that there is a human need that is not met in modernity and which opposes it. Barber argued that McWorld's commercialism threatens to make life meaningless. Both Huntington and Mahbubani cite the desire and need in different societies not to live under alien or foreign forces, but to find a path that is their own. Later on in this investigation we will look at the process of modernization in the way it impacts the human condition. There we will argue that central to modernization is a process of 'disembedding'. It is a fundamental human need to be embedded, but modernization works against fulfilling that need. However, the longing for embedding cannot be fulfilled in a fight *against* modernization. The attempt to create an alternative to modernization is bound to fail, whether it is that of radical Islam or of a political appeal to Asian Values that rejects democracy for Asian societies. The processes we have described in this chapter have a universal force that is hard to withstand. The true possibilities of finding embedding lie not against modernization, but *within* it. The seeds of modernity can grow everywhere, but they fall into different soils. Modernity can this way be given a society's own local character, by shaping it. This way, modernity can be embedded. This embedding comes from local traditions, not in their original form, but projected onto the plain of modernity. In this process, local traditions are transformed and come to permeate the structures of modernity. In the course of this chapter, we have come across several cases that point in this direction.

In section C, for instance, we saw that there is a universal directionality in the organization of the military. At the same time, we saw that England was late to implement certain modern

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<sup>79</sup> F. Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution*, New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2002, p. xii

reforms, especially in comparison with Prussia. However, it is hard to argue that the England of the nineteenth century was lagging behind in terms of modernization. In technology, economics and finance, England was the most advanced country in the world, but the influence of aristocratic notions remained in the country. Was this simply a remnant from the past, or were somehow local traditions fused with the structures of modernity to give it a local shape?

Another example concerns the policy experiences between countries with Import-Substitution Industrialization (ISI) in section A. We saw that whereas this policy did not work in Latin American countries, it was done successfully in East Asia. Much of this can be explained by policy decisions. Asian governments pursued different policies from their Latin American counterparts. But apart from these high level decisions, it also seems to have to do with how capable states in both regions are. Lower level corruption was one factor why this policy was undermined in Latin America. Were East Asian states simply more modernized and professionalized than the state sectors in Latin America or are other factors involved? Does the long legacy of strong traditional states in East Asia have an impact on how capable the state is in modernity?

In section C, we also saw that the protection of private property was an impetus to economic development because it created trust. This in turn lowered transaction costs for economic actors. But regulations are not the only source of trust. Local traditions also provide direction and predictability to human behavior. If a local tradition can provide a pattern of trust, doesn't this mean that this pattern can also provide the basis for modern economic activity?

Finally, in section D, we saw that India combined a low level of economic development with a well-functioning democracy. Is this an alien structure, that was developed by the British, that does not correspond to the country's level of development? If so, why didn't it collapse after independence as many theorists predicted at the time? Could it be that India's democratic system draws on local sources, that permeate this modern structure, and which could explain its success?

That traditional culture influences modern countries was seen by Fukuyama. In *The End of History*, he speaks of irrational forces of *thymos*, and in his book *Trust*, he looks at the economic consequences of high- and low-trust cultures. Although we will conceptualize this dynamic differently, Fukuyama's body of thought is more sophisticated and complex than other authors of Modernization Theory, who for instance spoke of 'the passing of traditional society'. More recently also, Thomas Friedman, in his embrace of globalization and modern communication technology, speaks of a world of individuals freed from their traditions, in a space that is 'flat'.<sup>80</sup> These type of theories fail to capture the complexity of the modern world. The universal process of modernization is only one side of the story. That does not mean that there is a viable alternative, separated from or opposed to the forces of

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<sup>80</sup> T.L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Globalized World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2005

modernization. Universal modernization is real, as we have shown in this chapter, but the other side of the story is the way that modernity is appropriated. The interaction of modernization with local traditions follows a logic of detachment and embedding. But this requires that we question the conceptual framework of Modernization Theory and specifically its anthropological assumptions. In the course of our investigation we will analyze the way the forces of modernization and local tradition impact the human condition. For this critical analysis, we first need to make explicit what the anthropological assumptions of Modernization Theory are. We need to understand how Modern Man is conceptualized.

## **F). Modern Man**

The social-scientific approach of previous sections yielded a concept of a universal movement, operating in different fields, towards a specific type of society in the course of modernization. Next to these processes on a macro scale, we can identify a concomitant dynamic on the micro, or psychological/anthropological scale. Now that we have identified what modern society looks like, what does modern man look like? Can we distinguish something of a concept of modern man that complements the described social developments?

Within Modernization Theory, the question of what constitutes modern man has been investigated by several authors. Daniel Lerner, whom we have already discussed, developed such a concept. Other relevant authors in this field include Alex Inkeles and Talcott Parsons.<sup>81</sup> The idea of modern man is also important in many contemporary debates and in the background of how we commonly look at the world. This idea has a long and extensive historical background. Predating Modernization Theory, it has been formulated by the founders of sociology<sup>82</sup> and before that in the theory of the social contract and the philosophy of the Enlightenment. When in the following we will describe what constitutes modern man, we will make reference to these early sources of this concept. Of course, the philosophy of the Enlightenment and other early modern thought is very complex and diverse. We cannot do justice to the diversity of the ideas and approaches of their authors. We will focus on some general and influential lines of thought that have been developed to describe what modern man is. Moreover, we will focus on those lines that complement the structures described in this chapter. So we will for instance ask what constitutes 'becoming modern' in the modernization of the economy or the transition to democracy. Whereas the macro structures

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<sup>81</sup> A. Inkeles, *Becoming Modern*, T. Parsons, *The Social System*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2001

<sup>82</sup> Specifically Tönnies' distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. It has been argued that sociology has been an discussion of this distinction. Emile Durkheim describes a process of individualization in the course of a transition from a mechanical to an organic society. F. Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundbegriffe der Reinen Soziologie*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1979 (1887) and E. Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, New York: The Free Press, 1984 (1933)

provide the conditions of modern society, we will now look at the 'self-consciousness' of modernity. How do we conceptualize ourselves as modern?

Turning first to the rise of capitalism and the spreading of open markets, this is a process that goes together with the revaluation of self-interest. The general increase of wealth that markets create is based on freeing and employing the forces of self-interest and in the process of modernization they come to be regarded as more positive.

The early eighteenth century philosopher Bernard Mandeville sought to show that much of our vices like fraud, pride, avarice and luxury were not inconsistent with a well-ordered society. Moreover, he sought to show that in many cases it were the vices, tempered by justice, that created much of the good things in life rather than the virtues. On the basis of this, he created his famous assertion of "private vices, publick benefits". As he writes in his *The Fable of the Bees*: "Then leave Complaints: Fools only strive/To make a great an honest Hive/ T'enjoy the World's Conveniences/ Be fam'd in War, yet live in Ease,/ Without great Vices, is a vain/ EUTOPIA in the Brain./ Fraud, Luxury and Pride must live,/ While we the Benefits receive: Hunger's a dreadful Plague, no doubt,/ Yet who digests or thrives without?"<sup>83</sup>

This confluence of private vices with public benefits is the key to Adam Smith's 1776 work *On the Wealth of Nations*, the classic text of modern economics. It is this dynamic that stands behind the 'invisible hand'. This principle states how the self-interest of individuals can lead to an increase in the welfare of all. We need to make the self-love of people advantageous to others: "In almost every other race of animals each individual, when it is grown up to maturity, is entirely independent, and in its natural state has occasion for the assistance of no other living creature. But man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. (...) We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages."<sup>84</sup> In connection with idea of the division of labor, Smith conceived of the basic concepts of modern economics. The view of human nature or anthropology, that pertains to this economic activity, thus implies being driven by self-love.<sup>85</sup> A strong critic of mercantilism, Smith argued that only a free market, hence based on free choices could lead to an optimal allocation of resources. It is by rationally ordering preferences that such an open market of demand and supply can arise. The view of man thus also implies a form of rationality. Markets work because individuals have a clear view of what their preferences are as well as what the market

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<sup>83</sup> B. Mandeville, 'The Fable of the Bees', in: D. Williams (ed.), *The Enlightenment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 399

<sup>84</sup> A. Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Harmondsworth, New York, Ringwood, Ontario and Auckland: Penguin Books, 1981 (1776), pp. 118-119

<sup>85</sup> However, what is often forgotten is that Smith also wrote *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, a supplement to the purely economic view of man.

offers. This way demand and supply are optimally connected. It is this concept of rational self-interest, which in contemporary work is defended in rational choice theory, that is connected with and supplements the rise of capitalist markets.

In the field of socio-demographics, we discerned a dynamic towards urbanization, an increase in literacy and education levels and a move from the extended family to the nuclear family. This dynamic is paralleled by a concept of modern man who no longer lives in pattern of traditional authority, but instead relates to others as equals through freely chosen contracts. The modern concept of the equality of all can be traced back to the thinkers of the Social Contract, who distance themselves from pre-modern concepts of natural hierarchy.

Hobbes' starting point is the equality of all in the state of nature: "Nature hath made men so equall, in the faculties of the body, mind; as that though there bee found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he."<sup>86</sup> This equality he places in contrast with the belief of the ancients in a natural hierarchy: "I know that Aristotle in the first booke of his Politiques, for a foundation of his doctrine, maketh men by Nature, some more worthy to Command, meaning the wiser sort (such as he thought himself to be for his Philosophy;) others to Serve, (meaning those that had strong bodies, but were not Philosophers as he;) as if Master and Servant were not introduced by consent of men, but by difference of Wit: which is not only against reason; but also against experience."<sup>87</sup> This natural equality of men and the absence of relations of authority stands at the basis of modern politics and is a central tenet in the work of the authors of the social contract. For Locke, because we are born as "Creatures of the same species and rank promiscuously born to all the same advantages of Nature, and the use of the same faculties", there follows a situation of equality "without Subordination or Subjection" in the state of nature.<sup>88</sup> And Rousseau also distances himself from Aristotle who saw hierarchy as a natural state instead of as an artificial product of society: "Aristote avant eux tous avoit dit aussi que les homes ne sont point naturellement egaux, mais que les uns naissant pour l'esclavage et les autres pour la domination. Aristote avoit raison, mais il prenoit l'effet pour la cause."<sup>89</sup>

The social contract thus starts from the position of the radical equality of all, and it is secondly characterized by the fact that the contract is based on rational consent. For Hobbes, "without mutuall acceptation, there is no Covenant" and "the matter, or subject of a Covenant, is always something that falleth under deliberation".<sup>90</sup> These authors of the Social Contract

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<sup>86</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, London: Penguin Books, 1985 (1651), p. 183

<sup>87</sup> Idem, p. 211

<sup>88</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, edited by P. Laslett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 (1689), p. 269

<sup>89</sup> J.-J. Rousseau, *Du Contract Social ou Principes du droit Politique*, Paris: Gallimard, 1964 (1762), p. 175

<sup>90</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 197



formulated their ideas of equality and contract in terms of a timeless theory of the origins of legitimate rule. It was in the nineteenth century, when thinkers started to focus more on historical development, that the theory of natural rights was reformulated in terms of a historical development towards equality and contract.

One of the clearest expressions of this can be found in the work of Herbert Spencer. According to him, in the traditional world, government is initially created from aggression. All such societies are what Spencer calls 'militant societies'. By the taking of slaves and the establishment of ranks, society is here based on *status*. Wherever commerce arises, a different type of society develops. On the basis of a freely established *contract*, people can cooperate and increase their wealth through the division of labor. In the course of history, trade and industry will more and more replace war and societies of status will turn into societies of contract. In his present age, Spencer states that advanced societies are of a semi-militant and semi-industrial type. One way in which this manifests itself is in the transposition of the 'divine right of kings' to the 'divine right of parliaments'. As a liberal and social-Darwinist, Spencer opposed the growing influence of government, even though it was an elected government. Government in all its manifestations is built on aggression and status. In a truly liberal world, government's influence will be minimal and contract will pervade all spheres of life.<sup>91</sup>

Turning to the state and its institutions, we saw a development towards general rules, bureaucratization and the protection of property rights. In terms of the conceptualization of modern man, this implies a shift from an aristocratic ethic towards an individualized commercial ethic. Bureaucratization means that the state regards all equally under clear universal rules. The traditional order is seen as one based on arbitrary power. The higher rank that certain people are born in, gives them the right to special prerogatives. In the modern world, such special prerogatives cease to exist. We saw that central in the modernization of the state is the protection of private property. This is connected with the rise of a commercial ethic.

In Hobbes and Locke we see the articulation of a commercial ethic that comes to replace an ancient warrior ethic. One of the sources of the social contract in Hobbes is the 'hope by industry to obtain the goods for commodious living'.<sup>92</sup> For Locke, society originates in the desire of individuals to secure their property: "The great and chief end therefore, of Mens uniting into Commonwealths, and putting themselves under Government, is the Preservation of their Property".<sup>93</sup> Together with this focus on property comes a devaluation of the aristocratic way of life. Hobbes for instance sees the quest for glory as merely a source of quarrel which is pursued "for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other

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<sup>91</sup> H. Spencer, *The Man Versus The State, (Postscript,)* Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, Inc., 1982 (1884), pp. 167-177

<sup>92</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 188

<sup>93</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, pp. 350-351

signe of undervalue, either direct in their Persons, or by reflexion in their Kindred, their Friends, their Nation, their Profession, or their Name”.<sup>94</sup> The quest for glory is seen as a folly as self-preservation comes to be seen as a dominant source of human action. Next to the hope to obtain goods, the other motivation that leads Hobbesian man to the social contract is the fear of death.<sup>95</sup> Locke states that revelation as well as natural reason tells us that all men have a right to preservation.<sup>96</sup> This valuation of life, work and property is part of what Charles Taylor has called the ‘affirmation of ordinary life’ in modernity.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, we will turn to the way in which the development towards democracy is tied up with a view of modern man. We will dwell longer on this field, because here we can most clearly establish a link between a grand social development and a concept of modern man. This is because modern democracy was accompanied by, and established through, specific documents that elaborate on the inherent concept of man.

Both the American and the French Revolution were strongly informed by the philosophy of the Social Contract. One of the strongest advocates of the American Revolution as well as an actively involved politician was Thomas Paine whose work is a radicalization of the work of John Locke. Agreeing with Hobbes, Locke saw the state as the force that can end a situation of war, but according to Locke it had to be differentiated from the world of civil society in which humans can interact peacefully.<sup>98</sup> Paine continues on this distinction between state and society emphasizing their radically different nature: “Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher. Society in every state is a blessing, but government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil (...)”.<sup>99</sup>

Paine was an activist in both the American and French Revolution and his views reverberate especially in American politics. In Paine’s work we see the formulation of the American tradition of hostility towards the state and the right to self-determination of civil society. Nevertheless, Paine’s work did not directly translate into American politics. This was the case with the Founding Fathers, many of whom were prolific writers in political and constitutional theory. They signed the Declaration of Independence and several of them became presidents of the country. James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay wrote

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<sup>94</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 185

<sup>95</sup> Idem, p. 188

<sup>96</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, p. 285-286

<sup>97</sup> C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989, pp. 211-302

<sup>98</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, pp. 280-281

<sup>99</sup> T. Paine, ‘Common Sense: addressed to the inhabitants of America’ (1776), in: D. Williams (ed.), *The Enlightenment*, p. 472

*The Federalist Papers*, which advocates the adoption of the American Constitution, elaborates on it, and still is an important source of politics today. In this book, the Lockean view of the virtues of commerce is expressed as well as the view that government roots in man's evilness: "But what is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary."<sup>100</sup> Apart from expressing the Lockean and Painean distrust of government, this passage also exhibits a more grim view of human nature, which points back to Hobbes. It is the ambition of men that is the greatest threat to the stability of the republic and this has to be moderated. However, instead of Hobbes' solution of installing the Leviathan, 'the king of the proud' which suppresses 'vainglory', the solution of the Federalists was that 'ambition must be made to counteract ambition'.<sup>101</sup> Another Founding Father, Thomas Jefferson called John Locke one of the three greatest men who ever lived. Most clearly we can see the influence of Social Contract Theory and Locke in the opening sentences of the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.<sup>102</sup>

Here we see several themes that we have discerned in our discussion of the concept of modern man: the focus on rationality (self-evident truths), the equality of all, the rights of individuals, the foundation of government in the consent of the people, and the focus on freedom and security. A Lockean formula comes back almost completely, except that after life and liberty, the pursuit of happiness rather than property, is part of man's universal rights.<sup>103</sup>

The other great political event that heralded in modern democracy is the French Revolution. This revolution too was accompanied by an explicit theory of man. In contrast with the American Revolution, in France the ideas of Rousseau were of eminent importance. One of the main protagonists of the revolution, Robespierre was strongly influence by Rousseau. For Robespierre, the deliberate and individual consent propagated by Hobbes and Locke was not adequate to improve society. To truly liberate man, the people had to have an indivisible

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<sup>100</sup> J. Madison, A. Hamilton, J. Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, I. Kramnick (ed.), London: Penguin Books, 1987 (1788), pp. 319-320

<sup>101</sup> Idem, pp. 319 and 88

<sup>102</sup> Declaration of Independence, 1776

<sup>103</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 (1689), p. 350

general will. In distinction with the individualist deliberated consent of Hobbes and Locke, which Rousseau called ‘volonté de tous’, Robespierre, analogous to Rousseau’s ‘volonté générale’, stated: ‘il faut une volonté UNE’.<sup>104</sup> And just as Rousseau took recourse to a civil religion as a means to foster this unity, Robespierre installed the so-called ‘Cult of the Supreme Being’. The spirit of patriotism that Robespierre believed was necessary to instill in the population was also advocated by Rousseau in his advice to the Polish government.<sup>105</sup> And echoing Rousseau’s belief that man is born free and good, but in society is chained and corrupted, Robespierre stated: “Man is good, as he comes from the hands of nature... if he is corrupt, the responsibility lies with vicious social institutions.”<sup>106</sup> Apart from Robespierre, we can also see ideas from Rousseau in the work of Abbe Siéyès, whose pamphlet *Qu’est-ce que le tiers état?* (‘What is the Third Estate?’) was highly influential in the French Revolution. His answer to the question is that it is ‘everything’, but that it so far has been ‘nothing’ in the political order, and thus asks to be ‘something’. In a Rousseauian vein he argues that “the nation is prior to everything. It is the source of everything. Its will is always legal; indeed it is the law itself.”<sup>107</sup>

Rousseau’s influence on the French Revolution is also clear from the bust of him as well as the copy of *Du Contrat Social* that were placed in the Assembly Hall of the National Assembly that came to power in 1789. The first meeting of this assembly was convened to write the ‘Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen’. This founding document has exerted a tremendous influence on modern politics and still is the prime source for the contemporary issue of human rights. In it we can discern echoes of Rousseau, but also those of Hobbes and Locke that we could find in the American Declaration of Independence. Its preamble and the first 6 of the 17 articles read as follows:

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power, may be compared at any moment with the objects and purposes of all political institutions and may thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grievances of the citizens, based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution and redound to the happiness of all. Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen:

Articles:

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<sup>104</sup> H. Arendt, *On Revolution*, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1990 (1963), p. 76

<sup>105</sup> G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments*, New York: Vintage Books, 2004, p. 175

<sup>106</sup> Idem, 184

<sup>107</sup> E.J. Siéyès, *What Is the Third Estate?*, London: Pall Mall, 1963 (1789), p. 124

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.
2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
3. The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.
4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.
5. Law can only prohibit such actions as are hurtful to society. Nothing may be prevented which is not forbidden by law, and no one may be forced to do anything not provided for by law.
6. Law is the expression of the general will. Every citizen has a right to participate personally, or through his representative, in its foundation. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in the eyes of the law, are equally eligible to all dignities and to all public positions and occupations, according to their abilities, and without distinction except that of their virtues and talents.

We can see the ideas of Rousseau in the reference to the Supreme Being, the general will as well to the sovereignty of the nation, which was not included in the founding of America.<sup>108</sup> On the other hand, article 4 states a form of liberalism that is much more reminiscent of Locke. The general principles that we have discerned in Social Contract Theory, freedom, the equality of all, property, self-preservation, the consent of the people, can all be found in this political document.

Hence we can conclude that the total package of modernization that we described in sections A through D is complemented by a concept of modern man. To the extent that these processes develop, we can also discern a change of man towards more rational self-interest, equality, contract-based relations, universal rules and freedom. Yet, as we mentioned before, we will argue in the next chapters that the universal process of modernization is only one side of the story. We will argue that the forces of local traditions animate the modern world. This also means that this concept of modern man is not sufficient to understand the contemporary world. Other elements also drive human activity and so a different anthropology is also required. Does this mean that the forces of modernization have simply not yet undermined these other elements and will do so in the future? Or is something more fundamental at stake here? Could it be that the concept of modern man operates from certain anthropological assumptions that belong to a specific *way of relating* to world and self that ignores

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<sup>108</sup> Hannah Arendt writes in *On Revolution* that the idea of sovereignty was considered to be very problematic by the Founding Fathers.

fundamental characteristics of human life, which is why modern man cannot fully be realized? This would imply that from this concept of modern man, which abstracting from a fundamental dimension of life, it becomes hard to articulate what the importance can be of local traditions. Because they worked from this concept of man, many modern thinkers saw the process of modernization as one of improvement, that would fulfill human nature and make man happier.

Indeed, Diderot described the mission of the *Encyclopédie* to “collect all the knowledge that now lies scattered over the face of the earth, to make known its general structure to the men among whom we live, and to transmit it to those who will come after us” which will make men “more virtuous and more happy”.<sup>109</sup> Immanuel Kant’s famously defined Enlightenment as ‘man’s release from his self-incurred tutelage’.<sup>110</sup> Antoine-Nicholas de Condorcet described a historical development that represented “the progress of the human mind”. By throwing off the yoke of tradition, there is no limit to the ‘perfectibility’ of the human race.<sup>111</sup>

What we will argue here is that the anthropology of modern man operates from a ‘detachment’ or ‘disembedding’ of man from his surroundings. This detachment is what the process of modernization brings about, but can only partially explain the human condition. It will be in a later chapter that we will show what kind of different anthropology is required, but what we need to show here is how detachment informs the concept of modern man.

In this anthropology, man has no intrinsic relationship with others. For Hobbes, natural man’s life is “solitary” (as well as “harsh, nasty, brutish and short”<sup>112</sup>) and we saw that for Locke society is there for the preservation of property. This isolation of individuals is also what distinguishes the modern theory of the Social Contract from earlier formulations of an order based on contract, that we can find in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. The crucial difference between the pre-modern formulations and those starting with Hobbes is that in the former case the contract was one that established political rule by a community. The community itself was presupposed. For the pre-modern authors, community was a given, something natural and could be taken for granted. With Grotius and Hobbes however, the contract that establishes government is *preceded* by the contract that establishes the community. With these thinkers, the contract starts with the isolated individual. The political order no longer starts with a community, but with political atoms or individuals that are sovereign and for whom authority has to be created.<sup>113</sup> As Leo Strauss puts it: “The tradition which Hobbes opposed had

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<sup>109</sup> Diderot in the article “Encyclopedia” in the ‘Encyclopédie’ (1751) from: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French and American Enlightenments*, New York: Vintage Books, 2005, p. 151

<sup>110</sup> I. Kant, ‘Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?’ In: *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 4 (1784), pp. 481-494

<sup>111</sup> N. de Condorcet, *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind*, Chicago: G. Langer, 2009 (1794) His students Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte similarly developed a theory of stages of historical progress as tradition was cast off.

<sup>112</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*

<sup>113</sup> See on this C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 193-194

assumed that man cannot reach the perfection of his nature except in and through civil society and, therefore that civil society is prior to the individual. It was this assumption which led to the view that the primary moral fact is duty and not rights. One could not assert the primacy of natural rights without asserting that the individual is in every respect prior to civil society: all rights of civil society or of the sovereign are derivative from rights which originally belonged to the individual.”<sup>114</sup> This priority of the isolated individuality is one part of the disembedding that is characteristic of the theory of modern man. Another aspect is the idea that the world in itself has no meaning or gives no direction, and that instead the human subject is the source of all value. As we read in Hobbes:

But whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth Good: And the object of his Hate, and Aversion, Evill; And of his Contempt, Vile, and Inconsiderable. For these words of Good, Evill, and Contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: There being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common Rule of Good and Evill, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves (...)<sup>115</sup>

Good and evil are not derived from the nature of objects, but are projections of the human subject. Traditional sources of meaning that derive from the nature of the world are rejected in the modern concept of man. Life should be directed wholly at the fulfillment of human desires. As Voltaire writes: “The main preoccupations of our species are shelter, food and clothing; all the rest are incidental, and it is these wretched, incidental things that have produced so much murder and devastation.”<sup>116</sup> In utilitarianism, the idea that achieving pleasure and avoiding pain are the only sources of value is worked out into a systematic philosophy.<sup>117</sup> Thus in this dynamic of disembedding, we see that man is not only placed against others, but also against a world that lacks inherent meaning and to which he relates to as the whole of objects on which he bestows meaning. The relationship to the world then also becomes instrumental or ‘detached’. We can see this in the modern concept of rationality. Reason is no longer seen as uncovering the order inherent in the world, but becomes calculative. In utilitarianism and modern economics, reason is concerned with maximizing

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<sup>114</sup> L. Strauss, *Natural Right and History*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950, p. 183

<sup>115</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 120

<sup>116</sup> Voltaire in the article on “Man” in the ‘Encyclopédie’ (1771) , from: D. Williams *The Enlightenment*, p. 184

<sup>117</sup> Thus we read in Jeremy Bentham: “Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pleasure and pain. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of cause and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it.” J. Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New edition, corrected by the author), New York: Dover Philosophical Classics, 2007 (1823), p. 1

utility. Already Hobbes conceptualized reason as “reckoning with consequences”.<sup>118</sup> And in Locke, we can see this instrumental stance towards the world in how he relates property to the activity (planting, improving, cultivating) that someone has put into something. It is mankind seeking control over his environment, “to subdue the Earth, i.e. improve it for the benefit of Life”, and the earth was given “to the use of the Industrious and Rational, (and Labour was to be his Title to it;) not to the Fancy or Covetousness of the Quarrelsome and Contentious”.<sup>119</sup>

Behind the concept of modern man we can thus discern certain broader assumptions. The world in itself is seen as inherently without meaning, on which meaning is bestowed by man. Furthermore, man relates to the world in a detached or instrumental manner, which he then transforms through his labor. What we want to do here in this section is simply make these assumptions explicit. We are not criticizing them here. Indeed, these assumptions are somehow appealing and seem quite plausible. But what we will argue is that this is not because they adequately describe the human condition, but because they articulate a way of relating to world and self that comes together with the process of modernization. These assumptions are adequate to the extent that the processes of modernization determine our lives. The realization of these processes is what we will call ‘Technopolis’. But this is only one side of the human condition in the modern world. Life is also characterized by the need for and the experience of embedding, or the world as ‘Dwelling’. To bring this to light, we need fundamentally different assumptions. In this way of relating the world is for instance experienced as having an inherent order to which man has to attune. It thus leads us outside of the framework of the concept of modern man. We can see this problem in the work of Fukuyama. He conceptualizes the influence of traditional culture through the concept of ‘thymos’. However, he sees thymos as the human faculty through which man bestows meaning on the world. He thus remains within the framework of the modern concept of man and he cannot clarify the experience of inherent meaning in the world, which we will argue comes with the embedding that originates in traditional culture. The modern concept of man abstract from, or ‘jumps over’ the primary experience of being embedded. Chapter IV will deal with these two ways of relating to world and self. There we look at how the forces of modernization and local traditions impact the human condition. We will first see how the disembedding that we have here related to the modern concept of man is inherent to the whole process of modernization that we will characterize as Technopolis. We will then formulate an alternative anthropology that pertains to embedding, or the world as a Dwelling. In this chapter we only want to hint at how the modern concept of man operates from certain assumptions that point towards a disembedding of man, and suggest that this is only a partial understanding of the human condition.

But before we can continue this line of reasoning, we first need to turn to the other pole of our original investigation. In this chapter we have discerned that there is something of a universal

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<sup>118</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 111

<sup>119</sup> Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, pp. 290-291



process of modernization. Now we need to understand in what way local traditions also animate our world.

## Chapter II: Traditions Shaping the Contemporary World

### *Introduction*

In the whole of this investigation we are trying to understand the role of culture, emanating from local traditions, in our contemporary world, i.e. against the background of modernization, as well as how modernity and traditional culture relate in terms of the human condition. In chapter I we took the first step of our investigation by looking at what modernization entails. In four fields, economics, socio-demographics, the state and regime type, we discerned a logic of modernization. Moreover, we saw how they interlocked to form something of a universal logic of modernization.

From the analysis of chapter I it seems plausible at first glance to argue that the role of local traditions has seriously diminished, or that they might even have disappeared completely. We saw that the pattern of modern development is spreading the globe. Local traditions that tied specific economic activity to certain status groups have given way to the market economy. To the extent that local traditions were linked to rural communities with relatively permanent social structures, these have been pushed aside in a mobile urban environment. Kings with their courts and aristocrats are displaced by modern states with popular rule. Imperial rule in China, India, Korea has disappeared and in countries that still have a monarch or emperor, like in Western Europe or Japan, they have become ceremonial.

It thus seems that local traditions might persist in fields that are unconnected to the universal forces of modernization, like local dress or culinary traditions (but here too, modern mass production has changed their character) or to the extent that they do impinge on the vestiges of modernization, they are neutralized, like the ceremonial monarchs of our age or put away in museums.

However, what we want to argue here, is that the situation is not as clear-cut as that. Underneath this surface, that has led many to believe that local culture has given way to universal forms of life, is a much more complex dynamic. We will argue that traditional culture is much more resilient than the above mentioned examples suggest and that it is quite influential in the modern world. And not only does traditional culture persist in an important sense, but we will argue that around the world, it also shapes the very forces of modernization. We will make this argument in this chapter by looking at those structures that in the last chapter were identified as the universal structures of modernity and see how they are locally shaped by forces of tradition. Of course, we can also look at other fields and see whether local tradition persists there, like in the arts, preference for certain sports or straightforward church attendance. However, the strongest argument that such a analysis could yield, is that in these fields tradition plays a role *next to* the forces of the modern world. What we want to do here is make the stronger claim, that modernity *itself is shaped* by local traditions. We have seen in the last chapter that there is a global convergence emanating from the forces of modernization, but we will argue here that these universal structures are permeated and shaped by local traditions. There is global convergence, but *within it*, there is

considerable diversity. In the following sections, we will look at specific cases to make this argument and we will argue that in these cases, traditions animate modern structures and can give them their specific strength or vitality. In the economic field for instance, we will look at examples of how traditions contribute to the competitive strength of economic activity. In the field of politics, we will see that the robustness of the modern regime of democracy can derive from pre-modern sources. Specifically, we will look at three phenomena in the following sections. First, we will turn to the so-called ‘developmental state’ (section A). This is a type of state that has not just managed to facilitate economic development, but which is its engine. We will look how this type of state works and ask what explains its success or failure. Next, we will look at industrial structure (section B). We will see that there remain considerable differences between countries in the prevalence of types of industrial firms, like conglomerates, business groups, small- and medium enterprises (SME’s) and competitive banks. Instead of all converging on one specific structure, the local configuration depends on the path the country has taken. Third, we will look at some cases in which we will study the working of democratic politics (section C). We will argue that a divergence in local traditions leads to a difference in the working of democratic politics. In these cases, we show how the four identified fields of universal modernization of the previous chapter are shaped by local traditions. Section A on the developmental state will show this with regards to the third field, of the state and its institutions. Industrial structure in section B concerns both the working of capitalist economics and socio-demographic features, like issues of hierarchy and trust. Section C shows traditions permeating both socio-demographics as well as democratic politics.

After these case studies, we will develop a more general conceptualization of the discerned dynamic in section D. Specifically, we will broaden our argument. We will argue that not only do local traditions persist in modernity as well as give it much of its vitality, but local traditions are the *required basis* of modernity. Without them, the structures of modernity cannot exist. The universality of modernization hides that everywhere it needs a local basis, or a ‘nutrient culture’. By looking at our cases, but also through the work of authors like Granovetter, Evans and Durkheim, we will show how modernity needs something non-modern. The sociologist Emile Durkheim spoke of ‘the non-contractual elements of the contract’. We will broaden this thesis into ‘the non-modern elements of modernity’.

In this section we will also ask whether there is something like ‘the best traditions’. Can we speak of a certain type of traditional culture that maximally gives vitality and strength to a modern society? Are there specific features that are always a source of strength for modern societies? We will argue that in a general way, several such features can be distinguished, but that there can be different ‘optimal arrangements’. Different traditions lead to different strengths and it is not clear how these different strengths can be ranked. The argument that local traditions shape the structures of modernity differently, yields the picture of what Samuel Eisenstadt has called ‘Multiple Modernities’.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>S.N. Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, in: *Daedalus*, Cambridge, 2000, Vol. 129, No. 1, pp. 1-29 and S.N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, 2 Vols.

## **A). The State: of Developers and Predators**

### *Introduction*

The first field in which we will look at the importance of traditional culture in shaping modernity is that of the state in relation to the economy of a country. Since the nineteen-eighties, neo-liberalism has become a prominent doctrine and it has propagated a minimal role for the state in the economy. The strength of this doctrine notwithstanding, a phenomenon that has spurred much debate in development economics over the last decades is the developmental state, which contradicts this doctrine. Especially in East Asia, we have seen certain countries sustain long-term economic growth, while at the same time having highly interventionist states. We already came across this phenomenon in chapter I, when we argued that in early phases of development, a state can protect ‘infant industries’, following Friedrich List rather than Adam Smith. What we will do in this section is explain what makes it possible for a state to be a driver of economic growth and we will argue that it is a culture that derives from local traditions that explains the possibility of having a developmental state. We will thus argue that a strategy of a developmental state is not open for all countries, but depends on the presence of such traditions. We will do this by looking broader than just the successful examples of state-led development. The strategies followed by the successful countries were namely also pursued by other countries, but with less success. Specifically in a certain period, several Latin American and some African countries also embarked on a similar strategy, but with much less success. In these cases, a powerful state turned out to be more of a predator than a developer. In this section we will explain the difference in the performance of several states in creating economic development. The argument will proceed in three steps. First, we will look at what it is exactly that a developmental state does. In part 1 of this section we will describe the extent of state intervention in Singapore, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and China. We will also there see if there is a general pattern of development that separates these countries from countries that develop without such an interventionist state. In part 2, we will look at some possible explanations of the model of the developmental state. We will see that the theory of ‘late development’ can explain how states can be successful in creating economic development, but cannot explain why certain countries have succeeded at this and others have failed. We will also look at the theory of ‘Asian Values’ as proposed by Lee Kuan Yew and argue that although it takes traditional culture into account, it is too crude and parts of the theory have been falsified. In this part, we will also define what the characterizations of a state must be in order to follow a successful strategy of development. This will concern both its internal structure as well as its relation to societal forces. In part 3, we will show how these characteristics can be explained by reference to local traditions. This

way we will argue that state capacity in the modern world is permeated and shaped by forces of culture that do not derive from the process of modernity.

### 1). Discerning a Model of State-led Development in East Asia

The concept of successful state-led development is usually linked to modernization in several East Asian countries. Most of the analyses of the region stress the importance of the state in the rapid growth in this region.<sup>121</sup> Except for Hong Kong, which followed a much more market-led path of development, bureaucracies and government agencies have played a leading role in Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and China. Indeed, the concept of the developmental state comes from a study of this region, Chalmers Johnson's investigation of the rise of Japan. And studies of South Korea and Taiwan elaborated on the concept.<sup>122</sup>

During the economic development of the West, growth was fuelled mostly by the private sector and the state played a relatively small role. Of course, we saw already that the state played an important role in the economic development of the West by protecting property rights, but also through the provision of infrastructure and general education. However, the concept of the developmental state goes further beyond this provision of 'collective goods'. This state is not just a facilitator, but actively and consistently intervenes in the market and becomes a motor of economic development.

Chalmers Johnson distinguishes between regulatory and developmental states which correspond to market rationality and plan rationality, respectively. In the former case, the state concerns itself with the *process* of the market through regulation and collective goods, whereas in the latter case, the state directs the market by positing *goals* through an explicit industrial policy.<sup>123</sup> The developmental state also takes on the role of an investment banker, by channelling funds into a certain preferred direction. And in some cases, the state goes even further, by acting as an entrepreneur, taking on market activity itself.

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<sup>121</sup> An exception to this is the consultant Kenichi Ohmae who attributes it solely to private enterprise in his book *The End of the Nation State*. However, he does not substantiate his claim with empirical evidence.

<sup>122</sup> C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy 1925-1975*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982 and A.H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992 and R. Wade, *Governing the Market: Economic Theory and the Role of Government in East Asian Industrialisation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990

<sup>123</sup> C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*, pp. 18-19

How can these activities be discerned in the economic development of East Asian countries? How has the state contributed to economic development in these countries and what kind of pattern can be discerned?

### *Short Overview of the State in East Asian Countries*

In *Japan*, bureaucrats from MITI (the Ministry of International Trade and Industry) have been influential in formulating goals for economic development and directing the course of industry. Starting in the twenties, the Ministry of Commerce, MITI's precursor, stimulated Japan's mining and manufacturing production. Industry started with light manufacturing (textiles) and was afterwards shifted to heavy industry (metals, machines, chemicals). This was done through the so-called 'heavy and chemical industrialization policy'. Japan's industrial policy includes the protection of sectors deemed important, subsidizing, and giving tax incentives towards certain preferred industries.<sup>124</sup> Due to Japan's dependence on imports for energy, the oil crises of the seventies led to a strong reaction of the state. Through regulation and subsidies, energy efficiency became a prime target in Japanese industry.

Other East Asian states have emulated the policies of the Japanese state by developing their own industrial policy. Whereas Hong Kong comes closest to the Western path of development driven by market forces, the other small Asian tiger, *Singapore*, did implement an industrial policy. In contrast with other Asian countries however, the country's growth has been highly dependent on foreign direct investments (FDI). Being a city-state, the country did not have a large enough base to develop a strong domestic corporate sector. The policy to attract FDI was implemented by the Economic Development Board (EDB). When Lee Kuan Yew became president of Singapore in 1959, he initiated the process of modernizing the country. The country was at that time predominantly agricultural and unemployment was high. Solving unemployment implied focusing on industry, as it is a labour-intensive sector, to absorb the surplus labour. Fear of the affinity that parts of the local Chinese community had with Communist China also led the government to focus on foreign industry to balance the power of this group.<sup>125</sup> Through the EDB, foreign investments were attracted. Policies initiated by the government included tax incentives (for instance, a company that introduced new technology could be granted 'pioneer status' which meant 5 to 10 years tax exemption), research and product development grants, small company grants, land provision, the creation of a science park (where tenants are expected to devote at least 60% of the office space to R&D activities and certain industries are prioritized like electronics, biotechnology and

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<sup>124</sup> Idem, pp. 83-115

<sup>125</sup> Lee Kuan Yew, *From Third World to First: The Singapore Story: 1965-2000*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, pp. 109-119

optical applications) and the provision of cheap labour through wage controls.<sup>126</sup> So although foreign private companies were the motor of Singapore's growth, it was through *targeted industrial policy* by the economic bureaucracy rather than free market dynamics that this was organized. Moreover, the stability and control that was paramount in attracting investments was achieved through the tight control of Lee Kuan Yew's People's Action Party, that has continuously ruled Singapore up to the present day, currently under the leadership of his son, Lee Hsien Loong.

To a greater extent than in Singapore, the state played a pivotal role in the economic development of *Taiwan*. Taiwanese development was much more spurred by local companies rather than foreign multinationals. The policy of the government towards industry like in Japan and Singapore entailed the specific targeting of industries. From the Japanese occupation up to the end of the Second World War, industrial production in Taiwan was small. The main pillars of the economy were agriculture, i.e. the production of sugar, salt and campher, and light manufacturing, specifically that of textiles, cement and fertilizers. After the Kuo Min Tang (KMT) fled mainland China and moved to Taiwan in 1949, it started a policy of import substitution industrialization (ISI) in the nineteen-fifties. The government restricted imports in the fields of textile, food, cement, chemicals and other light industries to foster growth of domestic firms in these fields. By 1963 industrial production exceeded agricultural production for the first time and as these firms grew in the sixties, they required larger markets. The government then took measures to promote exports in the form of tax rebates for exported goods, low-interest loans, devaluation of the currency and reform of the trade system. In the seventies the government moved back to import substitution, but now in the new sectors it wanted to develop in heavy industry. The Sixth Four-Year Plan (1973-1976) emphasized state support in petrochemicals, electrical machinery, electronics, precision machine tools, computer terminals and peripherals.<sup>127</sup> Like in Japan, the oil shocks of the seventies induced another change of strategy, moving to high-value-added and high-tech industries that were non-energy-intensive like machine tools, semiconductors, computers, telecommunications, robotics and biotechnology. To facilitate this, the government promoted more basic research and innovation. During the nineteen-nineties, Taiwan had lost its competitive advantage in cheap labour and had to move to more skilled labour to remain competitive internationally. Like in Singapore, the stability of the regime was an important factor in Taiwan's development. From 1949 to 1988, the country was ruled consistently by the KMT. Other policies and agencies were also characterized by a high degree of consistency. The semiconductors industry was launched by a long-term program of premier Y.S. Sun in cooperation with overseas Chinese in the US. Industrial targeting was implemented through the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) that had a high degree of autonomy from society and other branches of the bureaucracy so that it could embark on long-term projects. The state implemented policies similar to those of Singapore:

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<sup>126</sup> Kwong Kai-sun, Chau Leung-Chuen, Francis T. Lui, Larry D.Qiu, *Industrial Development in Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea*, Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2001, pp. 27-31

<sup>127</sup> R. Wade, *Governing the Market*, p. 97

stable real exchange rates, rebates on import duties, the creation of the Hsin-Chu Science-Based Industrial Park (HSIP) with tax exemptions and reductions of land rent and a science and technology program. Even more so than in Singapore, the Taiwanese state led the country's development.

In stark contrast with Singapore, foreign direct investment has been severely limited in the development of *South Korea*. The development and fostering of strong domestic enterprises has been a central policy goal in South Korea. State intervention has been a defining feature of the economy since the ISI-policies of the nineteen-fifties and -sixties. The country was a poor agrarian society when general Park Chung Hee started the transition to export-oriented industrialization in the sixties. This industrialization was state-led to a much greater extent than was the case in either Japan or Taiwan. A central impetus to this strategy had been the threat of North Korea, which was both militarily and economically more powerful than the south in the early sixties. One maxim of President Park had been "nation building through exports". Industrial policy was implemented by the Economic Planning Board (EPB). Not only were certain sectors targeted, but explicit targets for industrial output and export were set and companies were punished if they did not meet them.

Like the other East Asian countries, South Korea started its growth with labour-intensive light manufacturing industries. Initially, the state directed the economy through tax incentives, administrative support and infrastructure investments. In 1973, the Heavy and Chemical Industrialization (HCI) policy was introduced with the intention to target industrial machinery, shipbuilding, electrical, steel, petrochemical and non-ferrous metals. By 1990, these sectors accounted for 40% of the country's total exports. The targeted industries were planned to be internationally competitive as the domestic market was deemed too small. During the HCI policy, government planning of the economy was strong and detailed. The financing of industry came not from foreign direct or indirect investments, but was channelled from public resources through the National Investment Fund. Banks were directed by the state to provide preferential loans to the targeted sectors. In the early nineteen-eighties, growth slowed and inflation soared. The government shifted its policy towards more reliance on market forces and private enterprise. Growth picked up again during the second half of the eighties and the goal of the HCI drive was met as Korean companies entered Western markets in this period. The authoritarian political system of South Korea was an important requirement for the state's extreme intervention in the market. Under Park Chung Hee, the country was a military dictatorship and only in 1993 the first civilian president was elected. The authoritarian system was pivotal in controlling the business elite, but also in controlling savings as well as wages.<sup>128</sup>

After the death of Mao and the ascension to power of Deng Xiaoping, *China* opened to the world economy to become the central global manufacturing hub. This transition was to a very great extent guided by the state. Through 5-year Plans, the state guided the direction of

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<sup>128</sup> See M.F. Guillén, *The Limits of Convergence: Globalization and Organizational Change in Argentina, South Korea and Spain*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001 and A.H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant*



economic development. Coming from a communist regime, state leadership in the economy has been largest in China among the East Asian developers. The Chinese government has like the others followed a policy of industrial targeting. After reforming property in the agriculture sector, the export of agricultural products was stimulated to build up international reserves. Through tight control over the banks and foreign currency, the government guided the quantity and type of investments that were made. Currently, investments amount to well over 40% of China's total GDP, one of the highest rates in the world. To boost economic activity, the government set up the first four Special Economic Zones (SEZ's) in 1980 in the southern coastal provinces of Guangdong and Fujian. In these zones, business was exempted from government interference, special funding for infrastructure was provided and local authorities could give privileges to foreign investors. In Guangdong, the area of Shenzhen turned into the economic backyard of Hong Kong and has currently become one of China's wealthiest cities. In 1984, another 14 SEZ's were established along the entire Chinese coast. Within these areas, regions were targeted for certain industrial activity. The SEZ's of Guangdong focused on light manufacturing and later on services. The Pudong area in Shanghai has been designated for heavy industry like chemical fibres, cars, power generating equipment and personal computers. And as Shanghai lies at the head of the Yang-Tse River, it has been designated to develop the towns inland along the river. In contrast with the southern provinces of Guangdong and Fujian, that are strongly linked to the private enterprise of Hong Kong and Taiwan, Shanghai's economic model is much more state-led. Recently, the northern provinces have been designated to develop in heavy industry fields like petrochemicals, metallurgy, electronics and telecommunications and machinery. Even more so than in other East Asian countries, a large (but declining) section of the Chinese economy consists of state-owned enterprises (SOE's).<sup>129</sup> Hence, in multiple ways, the Chinese state has guided the economy.

### *A General Model of State-Led Development*

We noted several differences in the path of development that these East Asian nations followed. Singapore for instance relied strongly on foreign companies, whereas the emphasis in South Korea was on protecting domestic firms and China stood out in the extent to which state-owned enterprises dominate the economy. However, we have also seen a great similarity in policies that were pursued, which points towards an overall pattern of development. This suggests that we could discern a specific model of development that can be contrasted with the model followed by Western countries.

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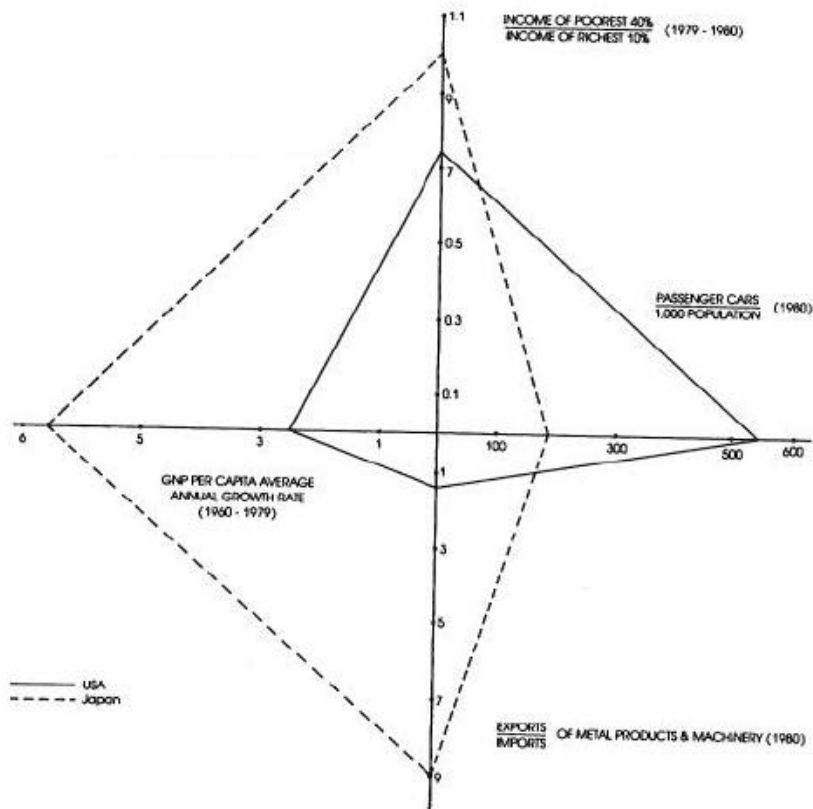
<sup>129</sup> W. Van Kemenade, *China, Hong Kong, Taiwan BV: Superstaat op zoek naar een nieuw systeem*, Amsterdam: Olympus, 1999 (1996), pp. 323-335 and J. Ogilvy, P. Schwartz, J. Flower, *China's Futures: Scenarios for the World's Fastest Growing Economy, Ecology, and Society*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000, pp. 22-24

It is clear that in all of the examined cases, the state fulfilled a very active role in the process of development. One of the fields in which the state exerted much influence has been in increasing the level of investment above the level of the open market. Through control of banks and funds, cash was directed towards investments rather than consumption. Another important field of state policy has been in ‘functional targeting’, investments that improve the functioning of the market. East Asian states invested heavily in education, the facilitating of R&D and infrastructure. In all of these countries, illiteracy was reduced at extreme high speed and especially technical education was fostered to bolster economic growth. More controversially, these states also embarked on ‘industrial targeting’: providing incentives for resources to be directed from less favoured to favoured sectors. Especially in heavy and chemical industry, the state distorted markets to foster the growth of these sectors. Another characteristic of these countries has been the orientation on export. After protecting and developing certain industries, companies were given incentives to export their production, in many cases creating globally competitive industries. Currently, Japan and South Korea for example boast car industries that are globally competitive, Taiwan is a global player in the field of semiconductors and electronics, and China is rapidly becoming the world’s leading exporter in a wide range of sectors.

We can conceptualize elements of this model of development by plotting them on a spectrum. In his book *Governing the Market*, Robert Wade distinguishes several dimensions that are relevant for the type of development of a country. He plotted the U.S. and Japan along four axes which revealed two different development models. The first dimension is the rate of consumption (for which car purchases are taken as an indicator). This denotes the extent to which resources are consumed as distinguished from being invested. A second dimension is the rate of inequality, measured as the income of the poorest 40% divided by the income of the richest 10%. Thirdly, Wade looks at ‘dynamism of the economy’. This relates to the size of the average GNP per capita growth rate. Finally, development can be measured by international competitiveness, measured as the ratio of exports to imports. If the U.S. and Japan are plotted on these four dimensions we get two different patterns of development. The pattern of the U.S. is the same pattern followed by Latin American and other Western countries, whereas Japan’s model is the same as that of the other discussed East Asian economies. The U.S. and Latin American model is distinguished by the following features: High rates of consumption, lower levels of equality, lower average annual growth rates and lower international competitiveness. By contrast, the East Asian model is characterized by austere consumption, higher equality, high average growth rates and high international competitiveness.<sup>130</sup> The graphic below taken from Wade’s analysis depicts the two models along the four axes.

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<sup>130</sup> R. Wade, *Governing the Market*, p. 49



The divergent pattern along the four axes suggest two different models of development. The merits of the path of development followed by East Asian countries has been the subject of much debate. Right after the 1997 East Asia financial crisis, the model was blamed for the crisis and it was claimed by some to be inherently flawed. To an extent, the bias towards investment and the highly leveraged character of East Asian companies (financing through high amounts of debt) contributed to inefficiencies, but on the whole it cannot be denied that through this model these countries have made tremendous achievements.<sup>131</sup> Whereas Great Britain grew at an annual average rate between 2 and 3%, East Asian countries managed decade long annual growth rates of over 8 %. Japan developed from a devastated country into the world's second economy in 45 years. In twenty years, China lifted 170 million people out of poverty while its GDP grew six-fold. East Asian countries did in decades what the West did over centuries. It took Britain 58 years to double its GDP per capita, the U.S. 47 years, Japan 33 years, Indonesia 17 years, South Korea 11 and China 10 years.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>131</sup> For the argument that the East Asian model caused the crisis see *The World Bank Report*. For the argument that the crisis was caused by a combination of the East Asian model, market liberalizations and Western capital see *idem*.

<sup>132</sup> These figures are taken from K. Mahbubani, 'The Pacific Way', in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 1, Jan. - Feb., 1995, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, pp. 100-111. Other data suggests East Asian countries developed even faster. With a growth rate of about 10%, China has doubled every 7 years.

## 2). Explanations for the Developmental State

This raises the question to what extent East Asia has developed an alternative and possibly superior model for the development of poor countries. Wade's analysis along four dimensions shows there is a coherent pattern in the way these countries developed. Does this mean that this model provides an alternative strategy for countries to develop next to the classical Western model? In other words, can developing countries, apart from liberalizing markets, of which we saw in chapter I that it is a central part of the process of modernization, also stimulate economic growth through a developmental state? Is it an extra tool in the process of modernization that can be applied universally? These questions are all the more actual by the global admiration for China's success. The suggestion is raised that African or Latin American countries should copy this path of development.

### *Alternative Theories of the Developmental State*

Such an proposal is supported by the idea of 'late development'.<sup>133</sup> This is the theory that argues that in contrast with the early developers in the West, late developers can take a different path because they can take advantage from the experience of the early developers. Whereas the pioneers had little idea where modernization and economic growth would lead to, late developers do know this and can more rationally plan their development. For instance, when the railroads or electricity were developed, it was not clear what their applications would be and thus how to organize them in an economy. For late developers, this has become clear and they can rationally plan national railway networks or electricity grids. From this theory we can argue that this concept explains the similarities between the development of Japan and Germany, a late developer in Europe. Just like Japan, Germany also had strong state involvement in the development of the economy. Furthermore, both countries have highly concentrated industries, finance is organized around banks and worker-management relationships are paternalistic. Similarly, the extremely rapid growth of the four tigers and China has also been made possible through the conditions of late development. They could rationally plan their development by copying earlier developed countries.

In these examples of late development, all the countries had authoritarian political systems. In order for the state to direct their plan of development, opposition had to be minimal and the rulers required great power over society. Japan's pre-war development was under an authoritarian system. After the war, the United States imposed a democratic regime on Japan, but still only one party, the Liberal Democratic party (LDP), ruled the country continuously

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<sup>133</sup> This theory has its origin in A. Gerschenkron's work and was elaborated on by A. Amsden in her study of South Korea

up to 1992. South Korea developed under the rule of general Park Chung Hee and only became democratic in the eighties after his assassination. Although slowly liberalizing, Singapore is still an authoritarian country. KMT leaders ruled Taiwan from 1949 to 2000 (becoming democratic in 1988) and in China of course, the Communist Party of China still rules the country.

More recently, Fareed Zakaria has argued the case for a strong state in developing countries.<sup>134</sup> As the case of the East Asian countries show, authoritarian regimes can achieve extremely high growth rates. By contrast, he argues, fostering democracy in many developing countries has often brought more bad than good. Zakaria compares the situation of living prosperously in Singapore without democracy with living in Nigerian chaos but with democracy. He suggests that between these two options everyone would of course prefer the former over the latter. What he proposes for the rule of developing countries is the type of the liberal autocrat, an authoritarian ruler who is pragmatic and committed to opening the economy in order to foster growth. When an authoritarian regime has succeeded in raising living standards and has created a sizeable middle class, a good-functioning democracy can emerge as happened in the advanced countries of East Asia.<sup>135</sup> Zakaria thus suggests that the developmental state is a different strategy, that can be applied more widely by developing countries.

Before we will investigate whether this is feasible, we will first look at one opponent of the belief that this is a universal model, Lee Kuan Yew, former prime minister of Singapore and currently its minister mentor.

According to Lee Kuan Yew the success of East Asia lies in the fact that it did not adopt the Western model, but instead it developed due to its 'Asian Values'. Advocates of Asian Values argue that modernization in terms of economic growth can be dissociated from the field of values. The countries of Asia share certain values that distinguish them from the West. These values include the pre-eminence of the collective over the individual, a preference for stable and unified politics over pluralism, respect for harmony, a focus on spirituality, strong state involvement in society and collective concerns that override individual human rights. In other words, the features of the East Asian model we distinguished above are linked to the culture of this region. More income equality in the process of development and high investment rates are rooted in a collectivist and disciplined culture.

Very often these values were linked more specifically to Confucian values, covering North East Asia as well as Chinese communities in South East Asia. Lee Kuan Yew argues "the more communitarian values and practices of the East Asians – the Japanese, Koreans,

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<sup>134</sup> F. Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004

<sup>135</sup> Zakaria argues that this was in fact what also happened in the West. Implementing democracy before prosperity was established, was one of the reasons for Germany's belligerent turn in the first half of the twentieth century. Idem, pp. 59-87

Taiwanese, Hong Kongers, and the Singaporeans – have proved to be clear assets in the catching up process”.<sup>136</sup> However, the concept has also been appropriated to the Islamic world by former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and several Indonesian politicians.<sup>137</sup> In other words, it is due to specific features of the region that the countries of Asia have been able to develop this way, which limits the possibility of imitation by other countries.

The concept of ‘Asian Values’ has encountered widespread criticism. In our explanation of the developmental state in the next part of this section, we will also point towards local traditions, but the way they are conceptualized in the idea of Asian Values is too crude. Many have emphasized that the concept is an instrument for dictators to legitimize their rule by claiming that their rule is grounded in the national (or continent-wide) culture. Critics have pointed out that as these Asian countries got richer, they turned democratic just like in other parts of the world. We examined this evidence in section D of chapter I. Rather than having a political model distinguished from that of other cultures, Asian countries differ in political regimes as much as other cultures and the differences seem to be best explained by wealth. Indeed, even Lee Kuan Yew has said that in time, Singapore could become more democratic. Hence, Asian culture is not necessarily tied to a form of soft authoritarianism.

Another point of criticism has been brought forth by the before-mentioned Fareed Zakaria.<sup>138</sup> He argues that the concept of culture as an explaining variable for growth does not account for the factor of timing. China has been Confucian for millennia, but its capitalist expansion started less than three decades ago. The culture of Singapore is very similar to that of Malaysia, but Singapore is at a much higher level of development. Similarly, Indian culture was long held to be resistant to modernization and economic expansion, following the so-called ‘Hindu rate of growth’<sup>139</sup>, but since 1991 it has shown remarkably higher growth. Also, Latin American Catholic culture has often been portrayed as inimical to economic growth, but over the last decades, Chile has shown growth rates comparable to those of East Asia.

What matters in all these cases is effective leadership and economic opening. China’s economy started growing when Deng’s pragmatic approach replaced Mao’s ideology. What makes Singapore different from Malaysia is Lee Kuan Yew rather than Confucius and since

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<sup>136</sup> Quoted from S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: And the Remaking of World Order*, London: The Free Press, 2002 (1997), p. 180

<sup>137</sup> M. Mohamad, *Reflections on Asia* Subang Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 2002, pp. 91-95

<sup>138</sup> F. Zakaria, ‘The Dustbin of History: Asian Values’, in: *Foreign Policy*, Nov/Dec 2002, Washington: The Slade Group, pp. 34-48

<sup>139</sup> This was an annual growth rate of about 4% combined with an annual population growth of about 2%, G. Das, *India Unbound: The Social and Economic Revolution from Independence to the Global Information Age*, New York: Anchor Books, 2002 (2000), p. 364

Malaysia has started imitating its economic policy, it too has also been growing rapidly. What mattered in India was the new policy of prime minister Narasimha Rao and his finance minister Manmohan Singh and in Chile the neo-liberal economic policy of the ‘Chicago boys’.

These arguments against ‘Asian Values’ present serious challenges to the theory. The level of prosperity better explains the regime of Asian countries than its culture and Confucian values do not preclude democracy. Similarly, economic policy and state leadership explain why countries start to grow or stagnate. Problematic about the concept of ‘Asian Values’ is that the relationship between culture on the one hand and economics and politics on the other is conceptualized in a way that is too crude. Both counterarguments focus on *change* in the way cultural features relate to modern economics and politics. However, as we will see, this does not lead to a wholesale rejection of the influence of culture on development. It does warn us for a too static or crude conceptualization of culture.

### *The Conditions for the Emergence of a Developmental State*

The theory of late development is important for explaining how it is possible that states can play an active role and speed up the process of modernization. However, what we need next is to understand what the characteristics of a particular state must be, in order to be *capable* of following this path of development. This is important, because as we shall discuss in a moment, other countries have also already attempted similar policies, but have been far less successful. To understand whether the developmental state is a tool that many countries can apply, we need to understand what determines this state capacity.

Central in determining this capacity is the influence of the traditional culture of a country, but in a more complex way than it is conceptualized by the theory of Asian Values. The theory of Asian Values does little to account for change over time in Asian societies, as we saw, but it does pose a relevant issue. The emergence of successful developmental states and the liberal autocrats that Fareed Zakaria speaks of, has been almost completely confined to East Asia. It thus seems that states in this region of the world have characteristics that make them more capable than the states of other regions.

In other parts of the world, countries have tried to pursue similar policies and create a developmental state, but they have been much less successful. Especially in Latin America in the second and third quarter of the twentieth century, states attempted to lead their countries in economic development. Under Getulio Vargas, the Brazilian state became very active in the country’s economy. Through various governments from 1930 to 1945, the era of the Estado Novo (‘New State’), new departments, ministries, councils and state enterprises were

created to modernize the country.<sup>140</sup> Just like in the Argentina of Juan Peron, tariffs were erected and subsidies provided to create a domestic industrial base. Although the initial focus was here much more on producing for the local market, the military regime of Brazil starting from the sixties, shifted focus to produce for the international market, like East Asian states have done. In Mexico, starting with the Cardenas regime in the 1930's, state-led developments became a prominent ideology. After the Great Depression and the Second World War, the *técnicos* (technically trained bureaucrats) became increasingly interventionist to overcome the deficiencies of Mexican markets. After the nationalization of the oil industry, starting from the forties, the state moved into the motor industry, expanded in petrochemicals and materials production. From 1940 to 1980, the extent of the public sector in Mexico was greater than in any other Latin American country.<sup>141</sup> And even in Chile, which is currently one of the most liberal economies in Latin America, the state expanded in industrial production under Salvador Allende and the country's copper producer, the largest in the world, is still state-owned. Also, outside of Latin America, developing countries have pursued policies of state-led development. After independence, India expanded its state sector. Through regulation, but also state-owned enterprises, it led development in sectors like textiles, steel and computer technology. After the oil boom of the 1970's, Nigeria sought to create an industrial base through the state. It channelled much of its oil revenues into state enterprises and the state sector expanded rapidly.<sup>142</sup> However, the state failed more radically in creating the economic development of East Asian countries than its counterparts in Latin America and South Asia.

So we see a strong divergence in the success of countries in creating a developmental state. Part of this can be attributed to policy mistakes.<sup>143</sup> However, these countries all sought to economically develop their countries through state intervention and pursued very similar policies. It thus seems that the capacity that these states had in implementing these policies widely differed. How can we conceptualize the characteristics a state needs to have in order for it to successfully pursue developmentalist policies? In other words, what are the factors through which we can explain the success or failure of a certain policy?

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<sup>140</sup> B.R. Schneider, 'The *Desarrolista* State in Brazil and Mexico', in M. Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999, pp. 276-305

<sup>141</sup> B.R. Hamnett, *A Concise History of Mexico (second edition)*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 247

<sup>142</sup> A. Kohli, *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 329-366

<sup>143</sup> A difference with East Asian countries was that these were much more export-focused, whereas the emphasis in Latin America was on producing for the local market. Nevertheless, East Asian countries also first started with producing for the domestic market. And as we saw, Brazil, under the military regime in the sixties and seventies did also switch to an export orientation. But by applying similar policy, Brazil was still much less successful than East Asian countries were.



We can define state capacity along two axes, one relating to its external relations and another to its internal structure. Externally, state capacity involves its relation to both the business community and society at large. The former is what Peter Evans has defined as the state's 'embeddedness' (this concept is different from the way we use it in the course of our investigation).<sup>144</sup> In order for a state to pursue intelligent industrial policy as well as have the necessary cooperation in its efforts, it requires to be embedded in networks, both formal and informal, with the business community of a country. Although the state may take the lead, it requires market forces to carry out its program. The state also requires a high degree of legitimacy in society at large. Development goals require that a state pursues policies which involves sacrifices in the short-term of which the benefits will only show over the long-term. The state needs a level of legitimacy to be able to carry out such policies without heavy opposition. Internally, a developmental state is defined by a high degree of professionalism. This means that it should have its own objective standards for achievement and advancement. So whereas a state needs to have good relations with business and society at large, it also needs to be separated enough from them to not succumb to their pressure. This other pole is what Evans calls the state's 'autonomy'. A state needs to have a strong 'esprit de corps'. Its autonomy can guarantee that a state consistently pursues its developmental goals.

It is along these axes that we can explain the different outcomes of countries in state-led development. One way to gauge both elements is by investigating levels of corruption. Transparency International is an organization that globally maps countries on the perceived level of corruption by the citizens. It ranks countries, ranging from a score of 1, which is highly corrupt, to 10, which implies a very low level of perceived corruption. This index gives an impression of both elements of state capacity. High corruption means that internally the state does not follow professional criteria. And because the index cites the perception of people, it also gives an indication of the legitimacy that the state holds externally. In the 2010 survey, we see that East Asian societies score persistently better in terms of lower corruption than Latin American countries. The wealthiest East Asian societies score very good: Singapore (9,3) ranks third in the world, but also Hong Kong (8,4) and Japan (7,8) have high scores. But also less developed countries like Taiwan (5,8) South Korea (5,4) and Malaysia (4,4) score high globally. The only sizable Latin American countries that score high are Chile (7,2) and Uruguay (6,9). The largest Latin American countries, that also have had little success in creating a developmental state, Brazil (3,7), Mexico (3,1) and Argentina (2,9) are perceived to be much more corrupt. The survey thus gives an indication that the success that countries have in creating a developmental state is linked to state capacity along the two defined axes.

More specifically, we can look at the mechanisms through which state capacity affected developmentalist goals. We saw above that in East Asia certain government agencies played a key role in creating a strong industrial base. The MITI in Japan, the EDB in Singapore, ITRI in Taiwan and EDB in South Korea coordinated the goals set for business. Domestic

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<sup>144</sup> P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy: States & Industrial Transformation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995

companies were protected and subsidized, but they were held to strict targets of production and exports. If companies failed at this, the professionalism of bureaucrats caused them to penalize these companies and withdraw assistance. By contrast, in Latin America's experiments with a developmental state, companies were also protected, but much less subjected to strict discipline by the state. Due to the lack of a professional internal structure or state autonomy, business interests could penetrate the state. Companies bribed bureaucrats to buy monopoly rights, licenses, get favourable legislation and get cheap foreign exchange. This shifted the focus in industry from entrepreneurial and innovative behaviour towards maintaining political contacts and rent-seeking behaviour. In India, the lobbying of big business in New Delhi to gain favourable state policy was so vast that their offices in the capital have been dubbed embassies. Instead of facilitating the working of the 'invisible hand', state officials became more of a 'grabbing hand'. By contrast, successful development was created by competent states, run by public-spirited rather than personalistic leaders and were staffed by well-educated professional bureaucrats.<sup>145</sup>

We can also see how the success of state-led development in these different countries is connected with the state's external relations. Large-scale transformation required the state to shift the focus of the economy to different sectors. We saw how in the course of development, East Asian states developed policy to move to higher value-added industries. This required the closing of lower value-added industries and the states of these countries have been quite successful in bringing this about. By contrast, in Latin America, the closing of mines for instance, went together with large-scale protests that inhibited the state's capacity to pursue its goals. Joel Migdal has analyzed how in many developing countries, the state is involved and influences the whole of society, but often lacks power over it, and has to adopt to society. In Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser for instance, the state broke the power of large landowners and succeeded in some of its goals, but its transformative plans were undermined by the strength of the rich and middle peasants.<sup>146</sup> Thus deference to the state is an important factor in the state's capacity to develop a country.

When a state lacks legitimacy with society at large and cooperation with business and when its internal structure lacks professionalism, we have the opposite of a developmental state, which has been called a 'predatory state'. Instead of developing the country, state officials squeeze out resources from society for individual gain. A clear example of such a state would be Zaire under Mobutu.<sup>147</sup> The cases we have discussed in Latin America, India and Nigeria fall somewhere in between the two poles of a developmental state and a predatory state, with Brazil somewhat closer to the former and Nigeria closer to the latter.

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<sup>145</sup> A. Kohli, *State-Directed Development*, p. 381

<sup>146</sup> J.S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 181-205

<sup>147</sup> For a vivid description, see P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, pp. 43-47

In sum, the possibility of creating a developmental state depends on state capacity. Conceptualized as an internal structure guided by a professional ethos and external relations of deference, it points towards the characteristics of the state as an institution. This in turn draws strongly from the culture of a society and its local traditions. In the last part of this section, we will see how this culture informs the state as an institution and how it then impacts state capacity.

### **3). The Impact of Local Traditions on the State as an Institution**

Up to now, we have shown that a developmental state is not a strategy that is open to all. It critically depends on state capacity and countries differ in this field. If a state has little capacity, then strengthening its grip on the economy could have disastrous consequences. Rather than becoming a developmental state, it could degenerate into a predatory state. But the question still remains on the origins of state capacity. Possibly, deliberate policy could increase state capacity. If that is the case, the first such a program of increasing state capacity could be put into place, after which countries that currently have weak states could still implement developmental policy. Deliberate policy is important in creating a capable state and we will see several examples of this. However, we will argue that the fundamental strength or weakness of a state depends more on factors that are less easily manipulated. A culture and its local traditions critically inform the capacity of a state. In this section, we will look at these factors have impacted the state as an institution in the cases we have discussed and show how they impact the working of contemporary states.

#### *Traditions that inform High State Capacity*

If we turn to Japan, China and the other East Asian states, a powerful cultural influence has been the legacy of Confucianism.<sup>148</sup> One important feature of Confucianism is its emphasis on learning and the respect accorded to the learned by the population at large. Indeed, one of the

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<sup>148</sup> P. Buckley Ebrey, *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook (second edition)*, New York: The Free Press, 1981 and T. Wei-Ming (ed.), *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996

reasons why Weber believed that Chinese culture was inimical to capitalist dynamism was that Confucianism placed the literati or bureaucrat-scholars highest on the social ladder.<sup>149</sup>

However, from the Confucian legacy a tradition emerged over centuries, which instilled a strong professional ethos on the side of bureaucrats on the one hand, and a respect in the population for the state, on the other hand and this informs the capacity of the East Asian state.

Especially in China, imperial rule was established early on. Already in 221 B.C., the emperor Shi Huang-Di of the Qin dynasty (from which China derives its name) unified a large part of the land that currently makes up China. The central regime early on sought to limit the power of local rulers and one of the tools of its centralized power was the imperial bureaucracy.

Traditional Chinese society has been very stratified and social mobility was low. And throughout its history, Chinese society has been extremely family-oriented. In classical Confucianism, there are five relationships that dominate society, those of ruler-minister, father-son, husband-wife, elder-younger brother, and friend-friend. The ties of the Chinese family (*jia*), are all important. There is an old tale of Confucius talking to a foreigner about the virtues of their respective states. The foreigner tells Confucius that the people in his country are so virtuous that if their fathers were to commit a crime, they would turn him over to the authorities. To this Confucius replies that in his country the people are so virtuous that if their fathers were to commit a crime, they would *not* turn him over to the authorities.<sup>150</sup> Indeed, of the five relationships, the relationship of father and son is the most important one as it lays the basis for *xiao*, filial piety, the central moral imperative in Confucianism.

On top of this extremely familistic character of Chinese society, very early on the institutions of the state were grafted of which the imperial exam was an important aspect. This exam to get into the imperial bureaucracy was extremely demanding and devised to be purely meritocratic. Family ties were of no relevance for admission. As such, the exam provided a route of upward social mobility in an otherwise strongly stratified society. Under the Han dynasty (206 B.C. to 220 A.D.) examinations were used for the selection of officials, but next to personal recommendations and patronage. Under the Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.) and specifically empress Wu however, the system became purely meritocratic. This policy to create a highly qualified and vast administration contributed to the stability of the Chinese state over the centuries. It created an elite based not on wealth or birth, but on intellect and character. The examinations were also highly competitive and demanding. Candidates would be sealed off in cells, sometimes for days on end to complete their papers, through which they showed their mastery of the Chinese classics.<sup>151</sup> The examination for the imperial bureaucracy

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<sup>149</sup> We will return to this argument in section D.

<sup>150</sup> In F. Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1995, p. 86 see also: Confucius, *The Analects*, London: Penguin Books, 1979

<sup>151</sup> W.S. Morton, C.M. Lewis, *China: Its History and Culture (fourth edition)*, New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1980, pp. 88-91

followed one of the basic tenets of Confucius' teachings, that authority should not be based on hereditary privileges and blood relations, but on the principle of learning.<sup>152</sup> Through such policy, state bureaucrats were esteemed highly in traditional China and the competitive and prestigious exam contributed to a strong ethic and sense of responsibility among its bureaucrats. It thus contributed to both elements of state capacity that we have discerned.

*Rooms in Nanjing in which students were locked up during their examinations, sometimes for days*



An interesting illustration of the esteem for the imperial bureaucracy is the classical Chinese story *Journey to the West*. It describes the ordeals of an ambitious god-like monkey. In one passage the lord of heaven is worried about this ambitious creature and consults with his ministers. They then decide to give the monkey the appointment of heading the heavenly stables. In traditional Chinese mythology, even heaven is a bureaucracy.

In the course of the twentieth century, much of the institutions of political Confucianism have been undermined. The imperial exam was banished during the reforms of the early twentieth century and the last Chinese imperial dynasty, the Qing, was overthrown in 1911. When the communists came to power in 1949, they set out to abolish the institutions of classical China. Only recently, with the turn of the communist party after Mao's death, the official regime is again starting to embrace the culture of traditional China. Nevertheless, the desire for education, the respect for the learned and the professional ethic of bureaucrats are elements of Confucian culture that pervade Chinese society, the onslaught of modern ideologies notwithstanding. Both the sense of responsibility from the side of officials as well as the respect of the population for these individuals survived and are elements of the Chinese institution of the state. Mao's regime continued in the Chinese tradition of deference to a state that stands at the centre of society and more recently, Hu Jintao's invocation of building a

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<sup>152</sup> M. Osten, *Konfuzius oder Chinas Neue Kulturrevolution*, in: *China: Insel-Almanach auf das Jahr 2009*, Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 2008, pp. 266-297

‘harmonious society’ also ties in with this theme. On the other hand, the pivotal role of the Chinese bureaucracy in reaching economic targets draws on a tradition of professionalism.<sup>153</sup>

By contrast, throughout its ancient history, Japanese society has been much less centralized. Whereas imperial rule was established early on in China, decentralized feudal relations persisted in Japan up to the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The evolution of the state in Japan has been different from that of China, but similarly, we can discern the development of a very strong institution, both in terms of its internal structure as well as its external relations.

Japanese society has been much less family-oriented than Chinese society. The Japanese household itself as well as the clan (*dozoku*), involved much more relationships with non-related people than their Chinese counterpart.<sup>154</sup> In the course of Japan’s history of feudal wars and instability, the class of the samurai emerged which developed an ethic of obligation and responsibility that was unrelated to kinship. In different localities, the samurai would offer protection from bandits to peasants in exchange for a part of the agricultural production. Often, a samurai would offer his service to a feudal landlord (*daimyo*). Apart from being formidable warriors, the samurai class had an elaborate ethic called *bushido*, or ‘the way of the samurai’.

The *bushido* ethic emphasized the typical feudal values of honor, loyalty and courage. The commitment of a samurai to his lord was an act of free choice. Once loyalty was sworn however, the commitment became lifelong. Loyalty to one’s lord stood higher than all other social obligations in Japan. Robert Bellah has argued that the obligation to the feudal lord in Japan assumed a religious character and he cites incidents in order “to show the obligation to one’s feudal lord taking a sort of religious ultimacy and overriding other religious considerations”.<sup>155</sup> The ethos of the samurai was written down in a secret doctrine by Tsunetomo Yamamoto, a doctrine that was later popularized under the population in the course of Japan’s modernization, spreading the doctrine of *bushido*. The overriding force of a samurai’s duty to his lord is exemplified by his admonition to “cut down the gods if they stand in your way”.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> On the other hand however, the possibility has to be held open that in the course of all the change in the Chinese state, corruption under the surface has grown more than we may think. A strong case for this argument is made by Minxin Pei in: M. Pei, *China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006

<sup>154</sup> The difference between China and Japan in terms of the relative importance of the family versus other social relations will be a topic we discuss in the next section on industrial structure.

<sup>155</sup> R. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, New York: The Free Press, 1985 (1957), p. 91

<sup>156</sup> T. Yamamoto, *Bushido: The Way of the Samurai*, New York: Square One Publishers, 2002, Book Eight, pp. 79-86

What is important for our concerns here, is the extent to which these concepts of loyalty and responsibility were woven into the institution of the Japanese state. Japan's modernization was initiated in the second half of the nineteenth century after Commodore Matthew Perry's victory over the Japanese fleet in 1857 abruptly ended a two-and-a-half century period of isolation in the country's history. The country was then united in the so-called 'Meiji Restoration' in 1868 after which it started an ambitious program of modernization. One of the cornerstones of this project was the extension of the samurai bushido ethos to society at large. The concept of loyalty so central to Japanese culture, was invoked to align the population with the modernizing elite.<sup>157</sup>

We emphasized earlier that the bureaucracy played a central part in Japan's rapid modernization. The ethos of the Japanese bureaucracy is historically strongly linked to the samurai class.<sup>158</sup> Before the Meiji Restoration, Japan had known a period of relative stability and peace under the Tokugawa shogunate. During that period, the feudal warriors slowly developed into a 'governmentalized class'. During the Tokugawa period, many samurai became administrative officials rather than warriors while retaining their original status. Initially, the bureaucracy was staffed by the samurai class. Bureaucrats in modern Japan have to pass the highly competitive Higher-level Public Officials Examination. This institution instils in them a strong sense of elitism and a sense of meritocracy comparable to the Chinese imperial exam. In many studies, the enormously long working hours of Japanese bureaucrats are cited, as well the theme of 'sacrifice for the public good' that pervades the bureaucratic organizations. It has been argued that, comparable to the 'the way of the samurai', something of a 'way of the bureaucrat' (*kanryodo*) emerged.<sup>159</sup> The elitism of the Japanese bureaucracy is emphasized by Johnson, who argues that the ministry MITI represents the greatest concentration of brainpower in Japan. The exam system enforces this as only 2 to 3% of those who take the exam annually pass. Apart from the formal meritocratic principles, the internal coherence and esprit de corps of the state is enhanced by informal networks, the *gakubatsu*, the ties among classmates of the country's elite universities and specifically the '*batsu* of all *batsu*', bringing together the alumni of Tokyo University Law School.<sup>160</sup>

In the course of Japan's modernization, political parties have been comparatively weak players.<sup>161</sup> State bureaucrats have shown a suspicion but also disdain for party politicians. This goes back to at least the Meiji period, with its idea that the state established the

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<sup>157</sup> C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy 1925-1975*, Stanford: California, Stanford University Press, 1982, pp. 36-40

<sup>158</sup> The following discussion is based on C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*

<sup>159</sup> Idem, p. 39 Furthermore, the impact of the *bushido* ethic in the Japanese economy can also be seen in the policy of life-time employment in much of the private sector, which buttresses a sense of obligation, comparable to that of the samurai to his lord. The focus here however is on the public sector.

<sup>160</sup> P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, p. 49

<sup>161</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan: 1853-1964*, New York: Modern Library, 2004, pp. 35-39

‘orthodoxy of the public interest’. By contrast, parties and interest groups were viewed as particularistic and egocentric. It is said in Japan that general wisdom resides in the state and only particularistic wisdom in society.

Not only can we discern a strong professional ethos within the Japanese bureaucracy, but also a strong respect for government officials is characteristic of the population. The common term used for government officials in Japan is ‘those above’ (*okami*). Another term used in reference to the state is respect for its ‘samurai sword’. Of course ‘sword power’ is in many countries used to refer to the power of the state. However, it is important to note here that the concept of the ‘samurai sword’ entails more of a symbol of authority than a means of force. The ‘samurai sword’ refers to the samurai family’s heirloom sword. This was a jewelled sword symbolizing the status of a household rather than being a weapon used to kill. Another indicator of the value placed in society on state officials can be seen in the relative value of jobs in business versus those in the state bureaucracy. In Western societies, a great part of talented students are drawn to business rather than the state. Salaries are better and business is often viewed as being more dynamic, demanding and more prestigious.<sup>162</sup> By contrast, the first choice for Japanese students is a job at one of the most prestigious ministries like Finance or MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry).

Whereas in the West, a common phenomenon is for someone from the business sector to move to politics later in life, this is highly uncommon in Japan. In Japan, bureaucrats are forced to retire after a certain age, after which they often take board member positions in business. The term designating this move, *amakudari*, lays bare the value attached to such high level and experienced bureaucrats, as it is translated as ‘to descend from heaven’. This in turn strengthens the other element characteristic of developmental states in their external relations. Not only does society at large have high esteem for state officials, but this system of *amakudari* creates a network of relations between the state and the business sector.

In the case of Singapore, it is difficult to discern the way in which traditional institutions and cultural features permeate the state due to the relatively recent founding of the city-state. Originating as a British entrepôt (trading post) founded in 1812, it gained independence in 1959. From 1963 to 1965 it was part of the Federation of Malaysia, after which it became an independent state. The Singaporean state can thus not lay claim to descent from tradition and much of the legitimacy that the ruling party, the PAP, enjoys, stems from the ‘performance principle’ rather than a traditional source of legitimacy. The Singaporean state and government have neither a religious nor a political ideology. Policy is characterized by

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<sup>162</sup> The value attached to working for the state does differ from country to country in the West. It is for instance esteemed much higher in France where prestigious schools like the Ecole Normale Administrative educate students for top positions in the bureaucracy. We will discuss this in the next chapter when we will focus specifically on the West.



economic pragmatism.<sup>163</sup> Nevertheless, Chua Beng-Huat has argued that this is in line with the country's Confucian heritage. According to him "Confucianism is a philosophy of this-worldly practices of governance, of unequal structural arrangements of social actors across different social terrains and scales. Its essential aim is the achievement of harmony in every realm, from the self to the family, state, and eventually the world".<sup>164</sup> However, the Singaporean state is much more the product of deliberate political craftsmanship rather than traditional institutions than its counterpart in China or Japan. The country draws on a Confucian culture of respect for learning and authority. Deliberate policy reinforced the autonomy of a state that is of relatively recent origin. Wages of state officials in Singapore are among the highest in the world. This is done to make state officials less susceptible to corruption as well as attract the country's talent like in the Japanese system.<sup>165</sup> A World Bank Report of 1993 cites that in Singapore bureaucratic salaries are 110% of wages in comparable private-sector positions, whereas in Somalia for instance, they are only 11%.<sup>166</sup>

In contrast with Singapore, the nation of Korea has a far longer history. As a polity unified in the Silla kingdom, its history dates back to 668 A.D. Although its identity as a nation is very strong and it is one of the most homogenous societies of the world in terms of ethnicity, the cultural influence on Korea has always been very strong. Confucianism strongly animates Korean culture. This can be seen for instance in the strong emphasis on learning and the respect accorded to the learned. It is a common Korean proverb that "one cannot even step on the shadow of a teacher". Korea also has a venerable state tradition. One feature of the Silla kingdom for instance was its youth groups, or *hwarang*. These were talented young people selected for the service of the state. They were trained in warfare, poetry, music, patriotism and communal life. Another aspect of Confucianism that traditional Korea took from China was the civil service examination (*haengsi*). An indicator of the sophistication of the ancient Korean state was the census that already in the eight century was regularly held and made detailed reports on fields like the number of livestock and trees per household.<sup>167</sup> But whereas the Korean state was complex and elaborate, the power of the centre was weaker than it was in China. This was due to the strength of the aristocracy (*yangban*), who had local authority and who penetrated the state. The state did thus not have a very strong capacity to bring about

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<sup>163</sup> In the early 1990s, the government experimented with teaching 'religious knowledge' in secondary schools, but cancelled it as they believed it was leading to divisions in society. The official policy on abortion has also changed in accordance with the economic situation as well as demographic developments.

<sup>164</sup> Chua Beng-Huat, 'Values and Development in Singapore', p. 108 in: L.E. Harrison, P.L. Berger (eds), *Developing Cultures: Case Studies*, New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 101-118

<sup>165</sup> Lee Kuan Yew, *From Third World to First*, pp. 157-171

<sup>166</sup> Quoted in P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, pp. 58-59

<sup>167</sup> M. Breen, *The Koreans: Who They Are, What They Want, Where Their Future Lies*, New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 1998, p. 82

societal change. Atul Kohli argues that although Japanese colonization of Korea in the first half of the twentieth century was highly brutal and oppressive, it did lay the foundation for a powerful state. The king was forced to abdicate and the *yangban* elite was either co-opted or undermined and replaced with an extensive force of disciplined state officials.<sup>168</sup> After independence, the South Korean state was weakened and fell prey to clientelism under the rule of Syngman Rhee. When Park Chung Hee however took power, and created the country's developmental state, he ordered the state back along the lines of the Japanese system and Korea's older traditions. Under his rule for instance, the ranks of the bureaucracy were filled more with *haengsi* examinees.<sup>169</sup> These traditions informed the South Korean state and defined its internal professionalism as well as its external influence. It thus could implement the policies of a developmental state: "The sternest discipline imposed by the Korean government on virtually all large size firms – no matter how politically well-connected – related to export targets. There was constant pressure from government bureaucrats on corporate leaders to sell more abroad – with obvious implications for efficiency. Pressure to meet ambitious export targets gave the Big Push into heavy industry its frenetic character."<sup>170</sup> It were Korean traditions that underpinned great state capacity.

The situation of Taiwan is quite different. Like Singapore it is a relatively young nation, but it also had an imported developmental state that had its origins in mainland China. The Kuomintang (KMT) ruled China since the overthrow of the emperor in 1911, but presided over a relatively weak state. After the end of the Second World War and the withdrawal of Japan, the communists took over mainland China and the KMT fled to Taiwan. About a million-and-a-half mainland Chinese fled to Taiwan and effectively took over the island. There the regime transformed itself and forged a developmental state. Part of this was due to the pressure of the conflict with the communists, leading the regime to create a strong state with a powerful industrial base. Another factor was the uprooting of the party from its home base. On the mainland local forces permeated the party, creating opposing forces and rent-seeking behaviour. Deprived of its local ties, the party could organize itself in a more coherent and disciplined way. Large effort was done to create a state that was coherent and free of corruption. For instance, K.Y. Yin, the person who dominated the lines of Taiwan's economic development in the 1950's was forced from office for a year on charges of a dubious loan to

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<sup>168</sup> A. Kohli, 'Where do High-Growth Political Economies Come From? The Japanese Lineage of Korea's "Developmental State"', p. 109, in M. Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999, pp. 39-136

<sup>169</sup> P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, p. 52

<sup>170</sup> A. H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 16

private firm.<sup>171</sup> The KMT could thus draw on some old traditions, but due to its migration, it also had to make use of much deliberate policy to create state capacity.

### *Traditions that inform Low State Capacity*

Traditional culture has contributed greatly in East Asia to both requirements for a developmental state, that we defined above. Traditions created a professional ethos on the side of state officials as well as concentrated authority in the state vis-à-vis the business community and society at large. Both have contributed to great state capacity in East Asian countries. Now we will turn to countries that have also tried to create a developmental state and pursued similar policies, but with much less success. We will focus on the before mentioned cases, mostly in Latin America, but also in Africa. We will see that in these regions different traditions animate the state, which have made state capacity along both axis (internal structure and external relations) much weaker. Specifically, we will look at three forces that define the state in these regions: colonialism, militarism and a personalistic elite.

A first pervasive influence on the state in Latin America has been the legacy of colonialism. A defining feature of this legacy has been a system of ‘patronage’.<sup>172</sup> The first Portuguese permanent colony in Brazil was established in 1530. The colony of Brazil was divided into sections headed by the post of a captain whose function was hereditary (*capitanias hereditarias*). By 1600, politics was structured around the production of sugar. Around the captain, a clan formed consisting mostly of families related by blood. Apart from this clan, there was also a large group of people consisting of slaves, workers, craftspeople, traders and small business owners who were for their living dependent on the captain or colonel. The country became independent in 1822, but since the beginning of the nineteenth century the imprint of the Portuguese court on Brazilian politics was strong. This entailed a high degree of centralization, a large bureaucracy and a great amount of noblemen and hangers-on. The Portuguese court established a practice that has been called *empregomania*, a state that distributes jobs to people with little regard to qualifications. This way, the origins of the Brazilian state were the structures of the Portuguese court.<sup>173</sup> This character of power in traditional Brazil persists to this day. Whereas Japanese prime ministers appoint only dozens of state officials and U.S. presidents appoint hundreds, Brazilian presidents appoint thousands

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<sup>171</sup> P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, p. 54

<sup>172</sup> Patronage is a form of personal rulership which is not based on a sense of the ruler’s personal qualities, but primarily upon material incentives and rewards. V. Randall, R. Theobald, *Political Change and Underdevelopment: A Critical Introduction to Third World Politics (second edition)*, New Hampshire: Palgrave, 1998, p. 83

<sup>173</sup> M.L.V. Barbosa, ‘The Importance of Culture: The Brazilian Case’, p. 255, in: L.E. Harrison, P.L. Berger (eds), *Developing Cultures*, pp. 253-265

(in one estimate between 15,000 and 100,000). The Brazilian state is considered a grand source of jobs (*cabide de emprego*), in which connections matter more than competence. Careers in the bureaucracy are heavily affected by this. They have a much more staccato character, influenced by changes in political leadership and the creation of new organizations. In the top of the bureaucracy, officials shift agencies every few years.<sup>174</sup> This undermines the internal structure that is necessary for state capacity. It works against long-term commitment by bureaucrats to certain agencies and the influence of external factors works against an esprit de corps centred around competence. Instead, the bureaucracy is politicized, with officials often giving interviews, making speeches, or seeking visibility in other ways as they look for new jobs, which is the opposite of the insulated autonomous bureaucracies in developmental states.<sup>175</sup>

In Argentina the colonial legacy led to a similar configuration of the state, exacerbated with internal strife that led to years of civil war. The central and northern areas of Argentina were part of the Peruvian Viceroy (the Spanish colony in South America) and were ruled by conquistadores who established a rigid and patrimonial form of government. The south of the country however, had a very different structure. The area of Buenos Aires had a port but was initially economically underdeveloped. With the rise of British trade, Buenos Aires became a flourishing commercial area with an outlook completely different from the northern and central areas. The movement for independence originated from the Buenos Aires area and started sixty years of conflict between its *unitarios*, people engaged in international trade and ideologically European on the one hand and the *federales*, based in the central and northern areas, seeking to preserve their secluded colonial way of life on the other hand. This persistent strife rendered the institutionalization of the state problematic. After independence, the Spanish colonies have been called “a decapitated patrimonial state in quest of a legitimacy formula”.<sup>176</sup>

Through Spain’s emphasis on the extraction of gold and silver, a mine-based economy was established in many parts of Latin America, creating a class of rentier nobility. In chapter I.D we looked at the rentier states of the Middle East and saw how this type of organization leads to weakly developed political institutions as they suffer from the resources curse. In Venezuela for instance, the rentier mindset was strengthened in the second half of the eighteenth century through the sale of newly created noble titles and privileges to creoles (Europeans born in the colonies).<sup>177</sup> Under Hugo Chavez, the Venezuelan state still works on

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<sup>174</sup> P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, pp. 61-62

<sup>175</sup> B.R. Schneider, ‘The *Desarrollista* State in Brazil and Mexico’, in: M. Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State*, pp. 292-293

<sup>176</sup> G.A. O’Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics*, Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1973, p. 119

<sup>177</sup> L. Ugalde, ‘Productive Values and Poverty in Venezuela’, pp. 308-12 in: L.E. Harrison, P.L. Berger (eds), *Developing Cultures*, pp. 305-325

the basis of redistributing the rents of the oil sector, rather than structurally developing the country's economy.

We also saw how in Africa, Nigeria attempted to create a developmental state following the oil boom the 1970's. Here too, a weak colonial government was erected on a population that before colonization had very little elaborate state structures. Its traditional power structure was very decentralized and tribal. This contrasts starkly with the East Asian societies where we saw that they can centuries of experience with centralized states, professional armies, exam-based civil bureaucracies and aristocratic civilization. On top of the weak state tradition in Nigeria, the British constructed a minimalist laissez-faire regime. The state the British created in Nigeria was very light and much less professionally staffed than its crown possession India. These traditions worked against the creation of an autonomous and capable state. When the state then attempted to develop the country, its weak institutionalization led to the squandering of resources and personal aggrandizement throughout the state.

The impact of colonialism on development is not similar in all cases. It strongly depends on the colonizing country as well as the period in which colonization happened. The imperial rule of Portugal and Spain overall did not produce strong autonomous political institutions. On the whole, British colonies seem to have fared better on this account. Among developing countries, former British colonies score higher in terms of democratization and have lower levels of corruption.<sup>178</sup> However, in Nigeria this was far less the case than in India or many of the islands colonized by Britain. In Taiwan and as we saw in Korea, the legacy of Japanese policy has contributed more to their economic development.<sup>179</sup> This had much to do with Japan's internal structure as well as the fact that the country started late with colonization, compared the European powers and felt the need to solidify an empire.

Apart from the colonial legacy, a second factor contributing to the weak institutionalization of the state in Latin America has been its militaristic tradition, or *caudillismo*.<sup>180</sup> A *caudillo* is a military leader striving for political power and he is a persistent figure in Latin American politics since the nineteenth century. One factor causing this power of the military were the wars for independence. Venezuela fought a war with Spain from 1811 to 1825 that left a great amount of military establishments in the country. These warlords seriously inhibited the development of civilian state institutions, effectively turning the country's many constitutions

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<sup>178</sup> L. Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 120 and S.M. Lipset & G.S. Lenz, 'Corruption, Culture, and Markets', in: L.E. Harrison, S.P. Huntington, *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, New York: Basic Books, 2000, pp. 112-124

<sup>179</sup> On the influence of Japanese educational policy in Taiwan see R. Wade, *Governing the Market*, pp. 74-75

<sup>180</sup> A correlate of this in Africa are the 'big men' like Mobutu in Zaire (now the DRC) and Mugabe in Zimbabwe that rule through military force

into meaningless paper. We already mentioned that in Argentina a long civil war erupted between *federales* and *unitarios*.

Whereas in the nineteenth century *caudillismo* was mostly responsible for civil war, in the twentieth century it had an impact mostly by creating military dictatorships.<sup>181</sup> Through the development of military academies, the informal armies were professionalized into national corps. Partly caused by the Great Depression, these professional militaries took power and between 1922 and 1932, Latin America experienced a wave of coups d'état. In Brazil, Vargas came to power, Peron in Argentina, Benavides in Peru, Terra in Uruguay and Ibanez in Chile. The rise of military dictatorships in Latin America in the twentieth century can be better explained by looking at a third persistent factor undermining the development of state institutions, namely the way in which politicians, specifically presidents, have undermined the development of party systems and the rule of law.

We saw that colonialism led to a weakly institutionalized state in Latin America. After colonialism, Latin American elites have very often exhibited a very personalistic style of leadership, further inhibiting the institutionalization of the state. Barbosa for instance argues that in Brazil, people vote for an individual, not for a party. Political parties in the country lack in discipline, principles and ideology turning them into little more than an association for special interests.<sup>182</sup> This is combined with one of the most permissive sets of electoral, party and congressional decision-making-rules in the world.<sup>183</sup> The effect is rent-seeking behaviour by politicians, creating parties that are used as tradable assets. Huntington has argued that political parties are the central (and only truly novel) institution of modern politics. They serve the role of mass mobilization and aggregation as well as channel new ideas and individuals into a system.<sup>184</sup> In Brazil, these functions are performed poorly by political parties. The Brazilian state of Minas Gerais for instance, was traditionally dominated by a rent-seeking landowning class. As the state sector expanded, the descendants of this class controlled the leading political positions of the state. Industrial development was thus captured and shaped by a traditional oligarchic class using state resources rather than being

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<sup>181</sup> A. Szirmai, *The Dynamics of Socio-Economic Development: An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 454. See also C. A. Montaner, 'Culture and the Behavior of Elites in Latin America', in: L.E. Harrison, S.P. Huntington, *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, New York: Basic Books, 2000, pp. 56-64

<sup>182</sup> M.L.V. Barbosa, 'The Importance of Culture: The Brazilian Case'.

<sup>183</sup> J.J. Linz & A. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 183

<sup>184</sup> S. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968, pp. 89-90

shaped by an independent state in relation to an entrepreneurial business community as we saw in East Asia.<sup>185</sup>

Not only has the development of political parties been undermined by personalistic leaders, but also the rule of law has often been a victim of their behaviour. For instance, in Argentina, presidents have attempted to stay in office when the constitution prohibited them from doing this. In 1994, Carlos Menem was the popular president of the country. He changed the constitution in order to be re-elected. Although there was popular support for this at the time, this weakened the autonomous structures of the Argentinian state, resulting in the turmoil after his departure.<sup>186</sup>

Together the practice of *caudillismo* and the weakness of political institutions like political parties and institutions explain the rise of military dictatorships in Latin America in the twentieth century. We saw that in the course of time the informal armies were professionalized through the establishment of military academies. By the early twentieth century, the army was perhaps the most modern and professionalized force in Latin American society and this was definitely how the military perceived it.<sup>187</sup> This made it possible for them to assume a political role. In this sense, this self-understanding of the military resembles closely that of the military in Turkey and Pakistan.<sup>188</sup> Based on shared values of meritocracy, order, discipline and rationality, the military aligned in the sixties with technocratic elites of the bureaucracy as well as business. O'Donnell has dubbed this type of rule 'bureaucratic authoritarianism'.<sup>189</sup>

The patronage system originating from an extractive colonial state, the tradition of *caudillismo* and the postcolonial style of leadership are all part of the institution of the state in Latin America. This contrasts starkly with the traditions of greater authority of the state over business, the greater respect for the learned and government officials, but also the stronger professional ethos of government officials in East Asia. These different legacies have contributed to a widely divergent level of state capacity in these two regions.

We started with the question to what extent the rapid modernization of East Asia can serve as a model for other developing countries. We argued that in East Asia's modernization the state played a central role. We can now conclude that the effectiveness of the East Asian state is

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<sup>185</sup> P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, p. 63

<sup>186</sup> M. Grondona, 'The Political Values of Development: The Case of Argentina', in: L.E. Harrison, P.L. Berger (eds), *Developing Cultures*, pp. 235-251

<sup>187</sup> G. Philip, 'Military rule in South America: the dilemmas of authoritarianism', in: C. Clapham and G. Philip (eds), *The Political Dilemmas of Military Regimes*, London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp. 128-150

<sup>188</sup> I will turn to the role of the military in the process of modernization later on in this chapter.

<sup>189</sup> G.A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism*

intimately connected with the way the state has been institutionalized in East Asian culture. This strongly limits the extent to which the model can be copied by other countries. Pursuing similar policies in other countries, in for example Latin America, would lead (and has led) to entirely different outcomes. If the state is weakly institutionalized, it is more likely to become predatory rather than developmental, and a growing influence of the state over society and the economy could prove disastrous. In such cases, rather than assisting the metaphorical ‘invisible hand’, the state is more of a ‘grabbing hand’. This conclusion provides a strong warning against the currently popular view of seeing China as a model for other developing and even developed states.

In chapter I we identified the general economic principles that led to the rise of Asia. We also saw there that the state played a pivotal role in this development. As we delved deeper into state capacity in this chapter, we saw that it is rooted in traditional culture and its institutions. We saw in the previous chapter that Modernization Theory postulated the withering away of tradition and its replacement with modern principles. It turns out now that in the case of the East Asian state, tradition does not stand antithetically against modernization, but has been a constitutive force underpinning modernization, and giving it a form different from other parts of the world. In sections E and D of this chapter, we will look at the implications of such a dynamic between traditional culture and modernity, but first we will look at other examples of this dynamic.

## **B). Industrial Structure: Companies Large and Small**

### *Introduction: A Variety of Profiles*

In this chapter we are looking at how local traditions lead to differentiated patterns within the universal frame of modernity. The four fields we distinguished in chapter I exhibit a universal path of development, but this path is also shaped by local traditions. Section A of this second chapter dealt primarily with the third field we discussed in chapter I, the state and its institutions, and with its effect on the economy, the first field we identified. In this section, we will start by focusing more specifically on the impact of local differences in this field of economics. To summarize our discussion of the previous chapter briefly, we saw first of all a



global movement of liberalization and integration into the world market. International trade as a percentage of the world economy has been steadily growing and trade and investment are everywhere getting a more global character. As a result of opening up to capitalist markets, countries go through a transformation, starting as a producer of agricultural goods, which are then displaced by industry and services as the core of the country's wealth. The field of economics we will focus on in this section, is industrial structure. This concerns the type of firms that make up a country's economy. Within the economy, there are many different types of firms and organizational structures. Types of firms that have been distinguished are the family business, the multinational company (MNC), the small-and medium-sized enterprise (SME), the state-owned company, the business group and worker-owned cooperatives. A central dimension running through this distinction of types of firms is size. It distinguishes multinational companies (MNCs) from the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The business group, to which we will return below, is characterized by a large and diverse structure. The family business is often also of a smaller size. This is not necessarily the case as there are very large family-run MNCs or business groups. That larger firms tend not to be run by a family can be attributed to the fact that as a company grows in size and complexity, some form of professional management from outside is usually attracted. The pitfalls of keeping a company in the family and the lack of skill in next generations has been referred to as the 'Buddenbrooks phenomenon'.<sup>190</sup>

Looking at these different types of firms, can we see an overall pattern in the process of modernization? Is there a directionality towards a certain type of industrial structure consisting of a specific type of firms? It seems quite clear that in the process of modernization, there is in terms of types of companies a general development towards larger scale. We have argued that there is a universal trend of liberalization, and as a result markets have become more global. Trade and investment have a much more global character than in the past, suggesting that economies are more and more dominated by multinational corporations (MNCs). This was also argued by authors in Modernization Theory. Kerr et al. for instance argue that "technology and specialization ... are necessarily and distinctively associated with large-scale organizations". And modern economic activity is "carried on by large-scale enterprises which require extensive coordination of managers and the managed"<sup>191</sup>. This growth in scale in the course of economic development works at the detriment of smaller and medium-sized companies (SMEs). It is associated with the decline of local small shops caused by grand department stores and the decline of groceries caused by the modern supermarket. In the popular mind, the increased rate of globalization of the last several decades is also intimately linked with the MNC. It is measured and discernable by the spread of global consumer brands in soft drinks, fast food and clothing. Indeed, Benjamin Barber's name for the world of global markets, McWorld, draws on this association.

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<sup>190</sup> The term derives from the novel *Buddenbrooks* of Thomas Mann with the same name which describes such a family business.

<sup>191</sup> Kerr et al., *Industrialism and Industrial Man*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960, p. 21

Yet although the MNC is definitely associated with economic development, modernization is not simply the replacement of small and medium sized companies with large companies. Not only do we see that different types of companies exist in economically developed markets, but we can also discern national differences in industrial structure. China's economic development comes partly from large state-owned enterprise, but its private sector is largely dominated by SMEs. Having already become the world's second biggest economy, China has still created few globally competing private enterprises.<sup>192</sup> China has become the factory of the world, but many people would be hard-pressed to name a Chinese company. However, it could be replied that although in absolute terms, China is already an important economy, in relative terms, it is still at an early stage of development. As China develops further, it will generate more large-scale private companies that have a global reputation. Will in time its SMEs give way to MNCs?

We can gauge this by making comparisons with the industrial profile of certain countries at different levels of economic development. One way to look at the extent to which an economy is characterized by large-scale companies is by looking at industrial concentration. This measures the share of large companies of the total amount of companies in an economy in terms of both capital and as a percentage of labour force employment. High industrial concentration means that several large-scale companies make up a large share of the size or employment of the total economy.

In many highly developed economies the level of industrial concentration is high. Among the countries with the highest scores are the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States. This could indeed lead us to expect a linear development from SMEs to large-scale companies as countries become more wealthy and industrialized. However, if we look at more cases, a more complex picture emerges.

In the South of Italy, the family business is the most typical form of organization. The region also has a low level of development. On the other hand, the northern part of Italy is a wealthy region and has become an advanced industrial region in the second half of the twentieth century. Yet, the economic landscape in this region is also largely dominated by small and medium sized companies that have flourished in congruence with Italy's internationalization and the growth of its exports. Furthermore, even in complex industries, like precision tools and heavy industrial goods, we still see the practice of management by a family rather than the transfer to professionalized management. So whereas there is a great difference in the level of economic development within the country, we do not see the disappearance of the SME as wealth increases. A comparable example is Taiwan. Since the nineteen-fifties, Taiwan's economy has grown at a high rate. From an economy based on agriculture and light manufactures, it is now a prominent producer of semiconductors, consumer electronics and boasts a diversified and complex economy. Nevertheless, industrial concentration in Taiwan

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<sup>192</sup> Its strongest companies of this type are currently probably Huawei and Haier.

is very low. The different high-tech sectors of the Taiwanese economy are driven mainly by SMEs. Taiwan's average GDP per capita is about ten times that of mainland China, yet this is not accompanied by the vanishing of smaller companies in favour of large corporations.

A contrary example is India. It began to open its economy over a decade later than China did. Currently, India's GDP per capita is less than half that of China. Nevertheless, its economy is strongly characterized by large-scale global companies. It are private companies that have captured a large part of the global IT services sector. Two of the world's largest steel makers are Indian, the country has globally acting pharmaceutical companies and the venture to create the world's cheapest car, the Tata Nano, is an innovating project that has broadly captured the imagination. And whereas almost all of the Chinese companies in the Fortune Global 500 are state-owned enterprises, India's list is much more equally mixed between private and public companies.

What explains the fact that at similar levels of economic development, countries have different industrial profiles in terms of the relative distribution of small and large-scale companies? Does this mean that just as we saw in the previous section of this chapter on the state, that there are different paths of modernization leading to different outcomes? If it is not the level of economic development, then what does explain the structure of industrial organization?

In section A, we distinguished between the development path of East Asia and that of the West. Does this distinction explain the pattern? There seems to be a correlation as high industrial concentration was found in Western countries like the US, Sweden and the Netherlands. Also, within East Asia, both a country with a low level of development (China) and a country with a high level of development (Taiwan) exhibited low industrial concentration.

However, we equally saw a low level of concentration in Italy. And if we look at other East Asian economies like South Korea or Japan we see a very high level of industrial concentration. Both economies are characterized by the presence of very large private companies. In contrast with China's exports that are driven by large state-owned companies and private SMEs, Japan's export is driven by large private companies. The country has several of the world's largest automobile producers and excels in the production of computers and consumer electronics. South Korea's largest private companies make up a large part of the country's exports and by some measures Samsung is the world's largest technology company. As these countries are economically more developed than China, does this mean that higher wealth in the end also leads to industrial concentration in the East Asian model? We have already seen evidence to believe that this is not the case.

In the previous section we grouped South Korea and Taiwan together in the East Asian model and both countries have similar nominal GDP per capita levels (according to the IMF \$167.074 and 16.372 in 2009, respectively), yet both stand at opposite ends when it comes to

levels of industrial concentration. For instance, from 1961 to 1988, the ratio of the number of SMEs to the total number of enterprises was 97% in Taiwan. And in 1993, six Korean corporations ranked among the top 100 global industrial enterprises, compared to one for Taiwan.<sup>193</sup> Similarly, high industrial concentration is not something recent in Japan. Throughout its economic development, Japan has persistently been characterized by large corporations, some of its largest private firms dating back over a century. An East Asian path of development hence does not imply to a low level of industrial concentration. Then what does explain this variance?

In the rest of this section, we will explain certain divergent patterns of industrial structure. In part 1, we will look at the prevalence in an economy of business groups, in relation to MNCs and SMEs. Here we will see that the presence of a certain industrial organization is caused by the specific path of development that a country takes. This can originate in the character of social actors as well government policy. The institutions that have developed in a country explain why its economy is characterized by business groups or for instance MNCs and SMEs. In part 2, we will look at another differentiation in industrial structure that we came across. There we will look at what explains why certain countries are characterized more by family-owned corporations, whereas others have a stronger prevalence of professionally managed large corporations. Specifically, we will look at the contrast along this dimension between China and Japan. There we will see that this variance is explained by more structural forces than the character of social actors and government policy. We will argue that the importance of the family in contrast with other social relations in the traditional culture of a country explains this difference in industrial structure.

### **1). Industrial Structure I: The Emergence of the Business Group**

We will first turn to the phenomenon of *business groups*. The business group prevails in several countries and has to be distinguished from the type of the modern large integrated corporation that is well-known throughout the West. The large corporations of the United States and Europe grew within a core technology family and from there, expanded horizontally and vertically through related diversification.<sup>194</sup> By contrast, the business group consists of a number of firms bound together under singular control, but which operate in different, often unrelated fields. Examples of this are the Indian business houses, the Korean *chaebol*, Latin American *grupos* and Pakistani and Turkish family holdings. These business

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<sup>193</sup> Kwong Kai-Sun et al., *Industrial Development in Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea*, Singapore: World Scientific, 2001, pp. 60-63

<sup>194</sup> A.D. Chandler Jr, *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990

groups are often engaged in activities as diverse as cement making, banking, steel production, telecommunications, insurance and the production of automobiles. Classical economists have attributed the prevalence of business houses to market failures. We will argue that although this is often the case, this is only one side of the story. What such an interpretation misses is the extent to which the existence of this form of organization is often deliberately fostered by state actors.

An example of a country characterized by business groups is South Korea. Its economy is strongly dominated by large business groups, the so-called *chaebols*. Practically all large companies in Korea are linked to a *chaebol*. These conglomerates are hierarchically organized and encompass a very vast number of companies in different fields. In 1984, the three largest chaebols (Samsung, Hyundai and LG) produced 36 percent of Korea's gross domestic product. This dominance of business groups has been at the detriment of SMEs.<sup>195</sup>

To explain this pattern in an international perspective, we can look to the investigation of M. F. Guillen. He conducted an in-depth research comparing and contrasting South Korea with Argentina and Spain in terms of their response to globalization.<sup>196</sup> In contrast with South Korea, business groups have all but disappeared in Spain, where on the other hand a vibrant SME-sector exists. The presence of foreign multinational corporations (MNCs) is very low in South Korea, whereas their presence is large in Spain. The Argentinian economy is dominated by business groups, at the expense of a local SME sector, but in different phases it has known a high presence of foreign MNCs. What explains this difference in industrial structure? Specifically, why do business groups flourish in Korea and to a lesser extent in Argentina, but have mostly perished in Spain?

Guillen links these organizational forms to four possible development paths distinguished on the basis of policies towards international trade and investment. Countries can have different policies towards *inward* trade and investment flows. If the policy is to keep these flows low this regime can be called 'nationalist'. One of the policy instruments to achieve this is protectionism in order to assure local ownership. If inward flows are tolerated or encouraged, the regime can be called 'pragmatic'. Both imports and foreign investment are freely allowed in this type of policy.

Secondly, economies can differ in the extent to which they are open to *outward* trade and investment flows. Outward flows are high when countries engage in export-led growth. This form of policy can be called 'modernizing'. By contrast, economic development can also be meant primarily for the domestic market, in which case outward flows are low and the regime engages in import substitution. This type of policy is called 'populist' by Guillen. Combining the two criteria leads to four possible configurations of development paths that countries can take: Pragmatic-Modernizing, Pragmatic-Populist, Nationalist-Modernizing and Nationalist-Populist. Guillén argues that the origin of the distribution of different organizational forms in

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<sup>195</sup> A.H. Amsden, *Asia's Next Giant: South Korea and Late Industrialization*, pp. 161-168

<sup>196</sup> M.F. Guillén, *The Limits of Convergence*

an economy lies in the development path a country takes and the specific institutions that this creates.

The capacity to develop business groups lies in the existence of privileged *access to resources* that these groups have to enter a new ( and unrelated) industry. These resources include inputs (labour, capital, raw materials), technology and market access. Labour is a domestic resource, whereas for many developing countries, capital and technology are generally foreign resources. Conditions in a country can be such that only local firms can combine both domestic and foreign resources and thus have a unique capability to enter new industries. This breeds opportunities for the growth of business groups. Such conditions are present in the *two asymmetrical* developmental paths in which one of the trade and investment flows is limited and the other is encouraged. For instance, in the *Nationalist-Modernizing* path, foreign companies are restricted from local inputs like labour and physical resources. On the other hand, the export orientation of the government will likely translate into preferential investment or export loans to domestic firms. Such situations favour those who are able to create ties to both foreign MNCs and the government. These connections form an advantage for entry in new industries, which non-diversified firms do not have. This has been largely the case in Korea which led to the growth of its *chaebols*. Similarly, business groups arise under *Pragmatic-Populist* strategies. Here foreign MNCs are allowed to invest domestically, yet the populist policy of the government (to service the local market) forces these MNCs to add value locally. This, combined with the fear of a hostile government that is inward-looking leads MNCs to seek local partners that have good connections with the state. In both cases, business groups have a certain advantage as they have a 'broker' role between the government and foreign MNCs. We saw a similar pattern when we looked at India in the last section. The Indian state has been very interventionist in the economy, seeking to be a developmental state, while at the same time it has been suspicious of foreign companies. The lobbies of the large Indian firms in New Delhi had been called embassies. It is through this privileged access that the diversified business groups of India could develop. Foreign MNCs were barred, whereas smaller local firms did not have the connections and resources to negotiate with the state. When thus a business opportunity arose in a new field, through for instance the sale of a license, the business groups had the advantage.<sup>197</sup>

Under symmetrical conditions, the advantages that business groups have diminish. In the *Pragmatic-Modernizing* path, the groups have no preferential access over foreign MNCs. The presence of these MNCs will force local companies to focus on their true competitive advantage and shed non-core activities or face bankruptcy. The latter is what happened in Spain in the course of the '80s when it shifted to a Pragmatic-Modernizing path. Moreover, this path also favours SMEs over business groups as they develop product-expertise and avoid the liabilities of being part of a group. This also makes them more interesting for the foreign MNCs as local partners. Finally, in the symmetry of a *Nationalist-Populist* the inward-looking bias and emphasis on autarky cuts off the technology and capital the business groups could

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<sup>197</sup> A. Kohli, *State-Directed Development*, pp. 257-288

broker from foreign parties. Also, the anti-business attitude of such governments creates an incentive for domestic firms to keep a low profile for fear of being expropriated. Hence, the industrial structure of such a path tends to be dominated by SMEs and state firms. The following table taken from Guillen depicts the four different development paths and how they produce a specific industrial structure.

<i>Level of Inward Flows</i>	<i>Level of Outward Flows</i>	
	<i>High (modernizing)</i>	<i>Low (populist)</i>
High (pragmatic)	<p>HIGH: Allow Imports and Inward investment HIGH: Export-led growth and Outward investment</p> <p><i>Context conducive to:</i></p> <p>Foreign MNEs &amp; SMEs</p> <p>4</p>	<p>HIGH: Allow Imports and Inward investment LOW: Import substitution and Local investment</p> <p><i>Context conducive to:</i></p> <p>Foreign MNEs &amp; Business groups</p> <p>1</p>
Low (nationalist)	<p>LOW: Protectionism and Local ownership HIGH: Export-led growth and Outward investment</p> <p><i>Context conducive to:</i></p> <p>State firms &amp; Business groups</p> <p>3</p>	<p>LOW: Protectionism and Local ownership LOW: Import substitution and Local investment</p> <p><i>Context conducive to:</i></p> <p>State firms &amp; SMEs</p> <p>2</p>

*Note: MNEs stands for multinational enterprises; SMEs for small and medium enterprises.*

Up until the nineteen-sixties, all three of these countries were engaged in a form of Nationalist-Populist policy. This closed form of policy was at the time the dominant development strategy in the Third World. After that time, the three countries followed different development paths leading to highly different industrial profiles.

What is relevant to note for our discussion is that as these countries modernized and responded to the global economy, they were not forced onto a singular development path with a specific universal type of development in their industries. All of them had to turn away from the earlier closed policy, as we described in chapter I.A, but how they integrated into the world economy and with what extent of liberalization was not predetermined. Moreover, countries could change their development path. Argentina has exhibited an erratic oscillation between Pragmatic-Populism and Nationalist-Populism, depending on the left- or right-leaning orientation of the government. Under Franco, Spain pursued a Nationalist-Modernizing path, but after his death and when the country joined the European Union, it shifted to a Pragmatic-Modernizing path.

But apart from government choices, it does seem to be the case that certain features of a society make certain development paths more or less plausible. For instance, the strong development of labour unions in Argentina as well as a strong anti-imperialist ideology (leading to a distrust of foreign MNCs) have been causes of Argentina's erratic movement away from Pragmatic policy.<sup>198</sup> Secondly, the centralized and patrimonial organization of Korean society have been favourable for the development of the business groups and have weakened SMEs.<sup>199</sup>

An objection might still be raised that although countries might have a choice of different development paths, one of them is clearly superior. In that case, instead of modernizing differently, we would see a pattern of some countries simply modernizing more than others. Several different options would then just retard modernization. It could be argued that Argentina, which on many indicators of development scores worst among the three, has followed an erroneous path. Moreover, we saw that the rise of business groups had to do with a market failure or distortion. It was because of privileged access and government contacts that these type of corporations developed. It can then be argued that a free working market would inhibit the development of this type of corporation. Spain, which followed the most open policy, is not characterized by business groups and also has the highest GDP per capita of the three.

However, a clear-cut ranking of the development paths is not that easy. We saw that it were specific policies designed to achieve certain ends that created the divergence. These countries have been successful in achieving different ends and it is not clear which ends should overall be preferred.

Turning first to Korea's path, it has clearly strengths in the fields of achieving fast growth, becoming competitive in terms of export. Moreover, the country has created a strong local base of technology. On the other hand, we saw that its model was negative for the sector of SMEs. Also, the strength of government and business groups went at the detriment of labour and labour rights. Another problem of the model is financial weakness. Because the strategy is very much focused on creating an export base, banks are heavily controlled and made subservient to the export manufacturing industry. The East Asia crisis of 1997 exposed the weakness of Korea's financial system.

By contrast, Spain's financial sector has flourished and has become internationally competitive due to the openness of the country's development strategy.<sup>200</sup> Secondly, SMEs have flourished in the country. On the other hand, foreign companies have a large presence

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<sup>198</sup> M.F. Guillén, *The Limits of Convergence*, pp. 123-156

<sup>199</sup> Idem, pp. 95-122

<sup>200</sup> In the wake of the global financial crisis, Spanish banks have come under great pressure. The collapse of a tremendous housing bubble is an external factor that seriously affects the country's financial sector. It is not yet clear how and to what extent the country's banks will overcome this crisis, but the overall trend of the last few decades that we have looked at here, has been one of powerful and international expansion.



and foreign ownership in the Spanish economy is high. As a consequence of the structure of foreign MNCs in combination with local SMEs, the domestic technological base is much weaker than in Korea.

The dominance of foreign companies is also high in Argentina and exports are low due to the country's inward-focused policy. On the other hand, labour has been protected better than in Korea's export push and since the eighties the country has been able to maintain a reconciliatory democratic system.

A preference for one of the development paths is dependent on the different ends one prefers: a strong industrial sector versus a strong banking sector, high export growth versus the strong protection of labour, the most efficient market causing low prices versus a strong domestic industrial base. Following on the last distinction, Korea intentionally fostered large domestic firms to create a strong industrial base, but also so that the government could through its relations with these few large firms direct the course of industry.<sup>201</sup> France has also pursued a similar strategy. The government has sought to create 'national champions'. It identifies strategic sectors, like energy (nuclear fuel), infrastructure and high-tech in which it wants to foster and maintain domestic expertise and through which it influences the direction of the French economy. Interestingly, the Taiwanese government has followed the opposite reasoning. It too wanted to maintain control over industry. However, it argued that large firms could have the power to oppose government goals, whereas a large quantity of small firms is easier to control.<sup>202</sup>

In sum, we see that there is no necessary universal logic in terms of industrial structure. The influence of government policy as well as other social actors, creates different development paths, which in turn lead to different industrial structures.

In the next part of this section, we will look at another aspect of industrial structure, namely the presence of large professionally managed corporations versus the family-owned business in an economy. We will also see that there is also considerable difference between countries along this dimension. To explain this, we will have to look at more structural differences between countries than we distinguished here, namely the character of social relations in traditional culture.

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<sup>201</sup> Kwong Kai-Sun et al., *Industrial Development in Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea*, p. 162

<sup>202</sup> R. Wade, *Governing the Market*, p. 322

## 2). Industrial Structure II: Kinship and Strangers

Now we will turn to another aspects of industrial structure. In the previous part of this section, we focused on the causes of the existence of business groups in a country compared with other types of organizations like foreign MNCs and SMEs. Another type of organization we mentioned at the beginning of this section is the family enterprise. We discussed the argument that the family enterprise is the dominant form of business at a low level of economic development and in the course of development it gets replaced more and more by large-scale businesses run by externally attracted managers.<sup>203</sup> Much evidence supports this theory. Large-scale professionally-run companies are more present in highly developed economies. Their presence is strongest in Western Europe, the United States and Japan and they are weakly represented in low developed countries. Yet we also encountered anomalies to the correlation that this theory predicts.

In the first place, the Italian economy is strongly characterized by family businesses and this is not only in the low-developed regions or in low-level complexity industries. The same holds for Taiwan, which has a complex and sophisticated economy. The different pattern is also striking when we compare China with Japan, on which we will focus in the following.<sup>204</sup> The large-scale enterprises of China are predominantly either state-owned enterprises (SOEs) or former SOEs. The bulk of private enterprise is done by smaller scale family businesses. China's tremendous economic growth over several decades stands at the core of relevant contemporary economic developments, yet as we saw the country has had much more limited success in creating large-scale internationally competitive private companies.

By contrast, the Japanese economy boasts many large-scale and complex private enterprises, many of which have become household brand names. Of course, Japan is at a far higher level of development with a GDP per capita that is about ten times that of China.<sup>205</sup> Yet the level of development cannot entirely explain the difference. Japan has had large-scale private enterprises for a very long time and at levels of development comparable to that of China today. Indeed, several of Japan's large companies and company networks (the so-called *keiretsu*) date back more than a century. Mitsubishi was founded in the nineteenth century and the conglomerates of Mitsui and Sumitomo were founded in the Edo period in the seventeenth

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<sup>203</sup> With 'professional' here I mean a company in which the management is attracted *primarily* on the basis of meritocratic criteria rather than family ties. It by no means implies that a family cannot run a company professionally.

<sup>204</sup> Francis Fukuyama analyzed the different pattern of industrial structure in Japan and China in his book *Trust*. Our reasoning here will draw strongly from his analysis.

<sup>205</sup> In 2009, Japan's GDP per capita was \$39,740. GDP per capita in China was \$3,735 (numbers are from the IMF and in nominal U.S. dollars).

century. Nintendo, the company famous for its game consoles, was founded in 1889, starting as a company involved in producing and selling card games.

With this long-standing history of vibrant and large-scale private enterprise, Japan stands out in the region. Such a tradition has little counterpart in both China and Taiwan. Currently, Korea has several large-scale private companies, the *chaebols*, but as we saw in the last section, they have to a great extent been the product of deliberate government policy since the 1960's. We saw that part of the Korean developmental state originates with Japan's colonial policies. Atul Kohli argues that also the Korean *chaebols* have their origins in the colonial policy that modelled them on their Japanese counterparts.<sup>206</sup>

In section A of this chapter we discerned the features of the East Asian economic model. We discovered that there were certain features that these countries shared in the way they developed economically. Now we have come across differences between these countries in the forms of industrial structure, and we will next discuss these differences.

We will look at the dynamic between local cultures and the rise of capitalist enterprise in East Asia. Relevant for this investigation is the work of Max Weber, who explicitly related culture to capitalism in this region. From his work, two arguments have been derived that discern obstacles to capitalist development in the region. Holding up these arguments against East Asia's success in capitalist development in the second half of the twentieth century does not falsify the Weberian claim on the link between culture and modernization, but shows that cultural patterns change as well as permeate modernization to create different forms of it. Specifically, we will see that the Chinese family, which Weber saw as an impediment to development has shaped Chinese capitalism. We will then contrast this with Japan, which in this respect differs strongly from China and see how this has led to a different type of industrial structure, much less shaped by family patterns.

### *The Chinese Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

We have seen that in line with classical liberal economics, China's growth started with the opening of its economy for foreign investments and by stimulating its export sector.<sup>207</sup> This way it could tap into its comparative advantage, *in casu* cheap labour, and grow at rates much higher than those of developed countries. It was thus due to the laws of economics and sound government policy that China's economy took off. Paraphrasing Fareed Zakaria, we could

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<sup>206</sup> A. Kohli, 'Where do High-Growth Political Economies Come From? The Japanese Lineage of Korea's "Developmental State"', p. 129-30, in M. Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State*, pp. 93-136

<sup>207</sup> See chapter I.A

say that “it was Deng, not Confucius”<sup>208</sup> who was the cause of this economic miracle. We already made qualifications to this view when we analyzed the institution of the state in section A. We saw that elements of traditional culture play a central role as they underpin the capacity of the state to act as an engine of growth. Nevertheless, the purely economic interpretation of China’s development does pose a serious challenge to ideas linking economics to culture. In much of the older literature on China, hugely based on the work of Max Weber, it has been argued that Chinese Confucian culture may be capable of a certain level of trade and business, but in the end it is incapable of capitalist development. Some have argued that China’s recent history has falsified this Weberian argument on the relationship between Confucianism and capitalism.<sup>209</sup> In order to assess the validity of this claim, we need to look at the reasons brought forth on why Chinese culture was deemed inimical to capitalism. Broadly, two reasons have been brought forth of which the first is a socio-political structure that devalues and marginalizes enterprise and the entrepreneurial spirit and the second relates to the strength of the Chinese family.

### *Political Confucianism and Capitalism*

It has been argued that in traditional Chinese society, merchants have always enjoyed low esteem. Of the four classes of society, merchants were deemed the lowest after the literati or bureaucrat-scholars, the peasants and the artisans. Moreover, the way of life of merchants was looked down upon. On top of the social ladder stood the Chinese gentleman who had an ethic that was opposed to change and dynamism. The ideal of the gentleman was adjustment to the outside, to the conditions of the ‘world’.<sup>210</sup> Other characterizations of the gentleman derived from the work of Weber were their unlimited patience, politeness, and insensitivity to monotony and uninterrupted hard work. These features of the Chinese gentleman are intimately tied to the Confucian idea of harmony. This idea stresses the necessity of man to adapt to the order and hierarchy that is present in the cosmos. This contrasts starkly with the Protestant ‘rationalization of the world’ in which man becomes a tool of God to alter Creation<sup>211</sup> or Schumpeter’s idea that ‘creative destruction’ is the essence of capitalism.<sup>212</sup> Placing the merchant so low on the social ladder and the bureaucrat-scholar on top fostered

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<sup>208</sup> In *The Dustbin of History*, Zakaria writes in reference to Singapore, “it was Lee Kuan Yew, not Confucius” F. Zakaria, ‘The Dustbin of History: Asian Values’, in: *Foreign Policy*, Nov/Dec 2002, Washington: The Slade Group, p. 38

<sup>209</sup> See for instance R.P. Weller, ‘Market Development, Political Change, and Taiwanese Cultures’ in L.E. Harrison, P.L. Berger (ed.), *Developing Cultures*, pp. 119-137

<sup>210</sup> L.W. Pye, “‘Asian Values’: From Dynamos to Dominoes?” p. 248 in: L.E. Harrison, S.P. Huntington, *Culture Matters*, pp. 244-55

<sup>211</sup> See also C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 234-247

<sup>212</sup> J. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (third edition)*, New York: HarperPerennial, 1950 (1942), p. 83

several mechanisms through which economic development was hindered. For instance, the rule of law, that was such an important element for the development of the economy in the West, was generally not applied to the enforcement of contracts. Laws in traditional China were administered by county magistrates who possessed a wide range of powers. Although some magistrates saw it as their role to protect merchants, this was not the norm.<sup>213</sup> A second mechanism proved to be pernicious for the long-term continuity of businesses. The esteem of merchants in China differed in time, ranging from the very repressive laws made in the Qin-Han periods to the more open Song dynasty. Yet whereas in many other parts of the world merchants could rise in social esteem and assume positions of influence, in China a merchant would have to reject his origins and identify with the elite culture. What often happened was that a successful merchant would use his money not to expand his business and pass it on to his son, but he would use the money to educate his sons in the hope that they could pass the exams for the imperial bureaucracy and this way move up the social ladder.<sup>214</sup>

Max Weber wrote in the early twentieth century. At that time, China was in turmoil and the country took a rejectionist stance towards modernity as it came from the West. Over the last decades however, capitalist development has taken root in China at a tremendous speed. This could lead us to suggest that Weber's analysis was incorrect. Its economic development proves that Chinese culture is not inimical to capitalism. Some authors have indeed pursued this argument. There is however, also another possible explanation. There is strong evidence to suggest that China is indeed developing along capitalist lines, *and* that Weber's analysis was correct.

Weber primary interest in investigating the link between local culture and capitalism was to understand why capitalism emerged in the (Protestant) West and not in China, which was in many fields highly advanced. In contrast with contemporary scholars who take up his work, Weber did not argue that capitalism could never take root in China, but instead that certain features of its culture inhibited it in the past. What we want to argue here is that Weber was correct in seeing in Political Confucianism (with its emphasis on bureaucrat-scholars and its devaluation of trade) an impediment to capitalism in China. In time however, this structure has been changed, freeing other aspects of Chinese culture that do underpin capitalism.

Indira Gandhi once complained that Indians seem to be doing well all around the world, except for in India. Something similar seemed to be the case regarding the Chinese up until recently. A phenomenon that has to be taken into account when discussing China's economic

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<sup>213</sup> D.H. Perkins, 'Law, Family Ties, and the East Asian Way of Business', p. 234 in L.E. Harrison, S.P. Huntington, *Culture Matters*, pp. 232-243

<sup>214</sup> We discussed the imperial bureaucracy and its examination system in section A. Exemplary of the way Chinese emperors stifled trade is that the founder of the Ming dynasty banned all private foreign trade. In 1435 the Chinese fleets were withdrawn from the seas and ships with more than two masts were ruled illegal. This ended a period that culminated in the travels of Zheng He, who with his large ships sailed around Africa.

development is the *huaqiao*, or the overseas Chinese. Historically, Chinese merchants outside China fared much better than their counterparts on the mainland.

This does indicate that the socio-political structure of Chinese society, from which the overseas Chinese were exempted, played a role in suppressing economic development. Without this structure, the strong Chinese work ethic was freed to pursue economic activity. Throughout East and South East Asia, Chinese merchants have flourished for over centuries. Whereas in mainland China, merchants were considered to be without culture, as all culture came from the literati, outside the country they established practices that came to be considered a culture in its own right (*wenhua*).<sup>215</sup> The overseas merchants established guild-like associations and coalitions built around temples of common use. Notable were the temples for the goddess of the Sea (*Tianhou*) and the God of Wealth (*Guan Yu*, who was also the god of war). Apart from these organizations around Confucian deities, merchants organized around local deities of the areas they emigrated to and Buddhist bodhisattvas.<sup>216</sup>

In several places, these Chinese merchants prospered and amassed great wealth. Most notable among these today in South East Asia is the Chinese community of Singapore. Although we saw that Lee Kuan Yew emphasized the Confucian tradition of Singapore, it is clear that the socio-political heritage of imperial Political Confucianism described above, that hindered capitalist development in China, was absent from this country that was established only in the 1960s. Chinese communities form an important section of society in several other South East Asian countries where they do not form a majority like in Singapore. In Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia for instance, they form wealthy minorities. Often they aligned themselves with domestic political leaders. The relationship between these Chinese merchants and the rest of the population differs strongly throughout the region. In Indonesia the relationship has often been quite antagonistic with poor Indonesians attacking wealthy Chinese in the wake of the East Asia financial crisis. In Malaysia, the great inequality of wealth between the Chinese minority and the ethnic Malaysians, or *bumiputra*, led to violent clashes in 1971. Afterwards an economic model was found in the New Economic Policy in which these groups were aligned. Under the leadership of Mahathir Mohamed and his UMNO alliance, Chinese merchants and their wealth were subsumed in a system in which ethnic Malaysians were positively discriminated in schooling and political offices. Tensions still exist, but this alliance is one of the main causes for the far greater successes Malaysia has achieved in economic development compared to other countries in the region.<sup>217</sup> Amy Chua

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<sup>215</sup> G. Wang, *China and the Chinese Overseas*, Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2003, pp. 203-220

<sup>216</sup> J. Chamberlain, *Chinese Gods*, Subang Jaya: Penlanduk Publications, 1999 (1987) and ibidem

<sup>217</sup> G. Rodan, *The Political Economy of South-East Asia: Markets, Power and Contestation (Third Edition)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006 (1997), p. 176. See also K.S. Jomo, *The Industrialization of South East Asia: Industrial Policy, Capabilities and Sustainability*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Publishers, 2001, pp. 172-175

has shown that throughout South East Asia, ethnic Chinese own the largest corporations. In this region, they are what she calls a ‘market-dominant minority’.<sup>218</sup>

These examples of the overseas Chinese give support to the idea that the socio-political structure of Chinese traditional society did indeed inhibit economic development. Freed from this structure, a Chinese merchant community with a strong work ethic evolved that prospered economically. These overseas Chinese played a pivotal role in the later economic growth of mainland China, to which we will return in a moment. First we need to return to the socio-political structure of mainland China.

Although we now have strong evidence that the structures of Political Confucianism inhibited economic development in mainland China, these structures have already been dismantled early in the twentieth century. The last emperor was dethroned in 1911, making it a century now since this central institution perished. First the nationalists and later the communists sought to radically alter Chinese society and they developed new political institutions. However, although this traditional impediment was removed, the new political structures did not free Chinese merchants in the sense that they were freed in the overseas regions. Just as merchants were despised in ancient China as the lowest social class, in Communist China they were despised as capitalist exploiters. Party membership of the Communist Party has even been denied to merchants.<sup>219</sup> It was only after the death of Mao, that Deng Xiaoping started to remove the structures that inhibited capitalist development in China. It was first the socio-political structures of traditional China and then the policy of the Communists that beat down merchants and the spirit of capitalism in China. Against this background, the words often attributed to Deng Xiaoping “to get rich is glorious” were a watershed in Chinese history and unlocked its capitalist potential.<sup>220</sup> After this change of course, other aspects of the traditional political structure could actually become an asset in China’s economic development, as we argued in section A. Freed from its anti-capitalist bias, the strength of the Chinese state made a developmental state possible.

### *The Chinese Family & Capitalism*

We have now argued that the idea that traditional Chinese culture has been stifling of entrepreneurialism is not necessarily refuted by China’s recent economic growth. The removal of Political Confucianism in mainland China and the evasion from it by the overseas

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<sup>218</sup> A. Chua, *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability*, London: Arrow Books, 2003, pp. 31-4

<sup>219</sup> F. Fukuyama, *Trust*, p. 84

<sup>220</sup> W. van Kemenade argues that the words were actually of Deng’s protégé Hu Yaobang, *China, Hong Kong, Taiwan BV: Superstaat op zoek naar een nieuw systeem*, p.13

Chinese seem to have been prerequisites for the flourishing of the Chinese market place. We can now turn to the second cultural factor that has been identified as an impediment to capitalism in China. The investigation of this factor will bring us closer to some of the defining features of contemporary China's economy and its industrial structure.

The second impediment that has been identified is the tremendous strength of family relations in Chinese society at the expense of other social relations. Above we saw the central place of family relations in Confucianism.<sup>221</sup> The father-son relationship is the foremost relationship as it establishes filial piety. Three of the five important relationships in Confucianism are family relations. Even the empire, as in other East Asian societies, was modelled on the family and the emperor had paternal authority over his subjects.<sup>222</sup>

A strong emphasis on family relations is held to hinder modernization in several ways. In the first place, it keeps people in conservative and hierarchical relationships (all three family relations are hierarchical (although reciprocal). The only relationship in Confucianism that is based on equality is that between friends). Family structures thus do not foster a spirit of free enterprise and innovation. Secondly, a strong focus on the family at the expense of other social relations entails small spheres of trust. Strong family-focused societies tend to have a lower emphasis on the obligation towards non-kin. Edward Banfield in his study of Southern Italy has called this phenomenon 'amoral familism'.<sup>223</sup> This for instance contrasts strongly with the Protestant ethic that emphasizes high moral standards towards strangers, freeing individuals from 'sibling fetters'.

Especially in modern societies, cooperation among non-related people, joined together by objective or meritocratic criteria is very important. Large enterprises require professional management and a relationship of trust between professionals.

It has been argued that the core of the Confucian ethic is the apotheosis of the family, in Chinese the *jia*.<sup>224</sup> That said, the Chinese family has to be understood much broader than the modern nuclear family. It denotes an extended family linking several generations (ideally five). Chinese kinship however extends even beyond the extended family. The lineage or clan is something of a family of families. It is defined as "a corporate group which celebrates ritual unity and is based on demonstrated descent from a common ancestor".<sup>225</sup> These clans can sometimes even include entire villages. On a more general level, *guanxi*, personal ties, denotes the relationship with people who have a shared identity, ranging from family to clan

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<sup>221</sup> 'The Traditions that inform Strong State Capacity', section A

<sup>222</sup> L.W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 185

<sup>223</sup> E.C. Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, New York: The Free Press, 1958

<sup>224</sup> R.J. Smith, 'The Japanese (Confucian) Family: The Tradition from the Bottom Up', pp. 155-172 in Tu Wei-Ming, *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity*, pp. 155-174

<sup>225</sup> Baker, quoted in F. Fukuyama, *Trust*, p.91



and geographical origin. As such, *guanxi* is distinguished from connections based on merit and those based primarily on personal acquaintance (as those who have a relation of *guanxi* need not necessarily know each other personally). In the words of China scholar Lucian W. Pye, “in China, achievement was rewarded within the family, and the Confucian duties of the sons to the father, and of the younger and older brothers to each other, were lifetime obligations. The tradition was thus inward looking, and there is a basic instinct to distrust people in the non-family world”.<sup>226</sup> The central place of family relations and other personal relations hinder modernization as it can easily foster cronyism and other forms of corruption.

How does this argument on how the strength of the Chinese family impedes capitalism relate to the impressive capitalist development of the country that we are witnessing now? One suggestion could be that, like the low regard of business of Political Confucianism, the influence of the family has waned in China in the course of its development. Through policies like those of the Cultural Revolution, the Communist Party pursued the explicit goal to weaken the influence of the Chinese family and to strengthen allegiance to the state. Furthermore, the one-child policy strongly impacted the dynamics of family life and in recent decades, urbanization also altered family life.

Yet most of the research indicates that factors like urbanization have not weakened family ties.<sup>227</sup> Communist ideology has waned and it is even argued that ideological radicalism and the many reforms that were pursued have actually strengthened the Chinese family as the only refuge of stability. Moreover, there is even evidence to suggest that as China develops economically, the values of Confucian family life are actually strengthened. A famous TV host in China for instance helps people with everyday problem by taking recourse to the teachings of Confucius.<sup>228</sup> So if the *jia* and *guanxi* have not succumbed to these pressures, how does this ‘familism’ relate to economic development?

Rather than having disappeared, the Chinese family persists in China’s economic development, producing a pattern different from that of other countries. The argument, taken from Max Weber, that the Chinese family hinders capitalist development, has to be amended. This focus on the family might hinder a specific form of capitalism, but also creates a *different form of capitalism*, structured around family lines. We saw above that China and societies with Chinese culture like Taiwan have a low level of industrial concentration. Practically all of the large enterprises in China are state-owned or were so in the past. The bulk of Chinese enterprises are smaller family-owned companies. There are many notable examples of Chinese firms where the business is passed on from father to son. This breeds the problems discussed above when professionalism is not institutionalized. As Perkins states

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<sup>226</sup> L.W. Pye, “Asian Values”, pp. 250-251

<sup>227</sup> F. Fukuyama, *Trust*, p.93

<sup>228</sup> D.A. Bell, *China’s New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society*, pp. 163-174

“even by the end of the 1990s, very few private firms owned by local people in Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Malaysia had made the transition to a professional (as contrasted to a family-based) management and control system”<sup>229</sup>. This has prevented many private firms from growing in scale and moving into complex technological sectors.

China is indeed rapidly industrializing, but this does not refute the argument on the effects of familism. Confucian familism indeed seems to hinder the development of private enterprises of the type we know in the West or in Japan. The Confucian family persists in China’s modernization and gives it a different character.<sup>230</sup> A similar dynamic holds for the effects of the networks based on personal relations (*guanxiye*). These type of relations have been blamed for many inefficiencies like cronyism and this way for having caused the East Asia financial crisis of 1997.<sup>231</sup> Nevertheless, these classical Chinese relations persist in China’s modern economy and they also have had a positive impact on China’s economic growth. Lacking a rule of law and judiciary protection, these personal networks formed a way in which people could still cooperate in trust and invest for the long-term. For instance, in the absence of financial institutions, rotating credit associations based on *guanxi* formed a way for small entrepreneurs in Taiwan to gain credit.<sup>232</sup> These rotating credit systems also form the basis of the enterprise of the Chinese diaspora throughout the world, in the West, as well as in Africa and Latin America.

There is another sense in which traditional Confucian family relations impacted and shaped China’s modernization. Above we looked at the prospering overseas Chinese communities in East and South East Asia. The ties of *guanxi* that these overseas Chinese had, provided the bulk of the foreign investments into mainland China when the country initially opened its economy and still represent huge capital flows. In 2000 for instance, two-third of foreign investments in China still came from overseas Chinese.<sup>233</sup> The zones that opened up first to the global economy were those along the southern coast line, which is where 90% of the overseas Chinese originate from. Investments flowed specifically from Hong Kong into the neighbouring province of Guangdong and from Taiwan into Fujian, the province that lies across the Taiwan Strait. After the opening of China, successful overseas Chinese returned to their home towns or those of their ancestors, where they set up businesses on the basis of their *guanxi*.

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<sup>229</sup> D.H. Perkins, ‘Law, Family Ties, and the East Asian Way of Business’, pp. 237-238

<sup>230</sup> We will turn to Japan next. We will see that Japanese culture on some accounts actually stands closer to the West than to China. Yet also in the Japanese context we will see that its specific culture and institutions shape its modernization.

<sup>231</sup> D.H. Perkins, ‘Law, Family Ties, and the East Asian Way of Business’, p. 232

<sup>232</sup> R.P. Weller, ‘Market Development, Political Change, and Taiwanese Cultures’, in: L.E. Harrison, P.L. Berger (eds), *Developing Cultures*, pp. 119-137 Comparable to Taiwan, in China now, so-called TVEs are also growing (Town & Village Enterprises).

<sup>233</sup> J. Ogilvy, P. Schwartz, J. Flower, *China’s Futures*, p. 33

### *The Contrast with Japanese Culture: Samurai Economics*

Now we will contrast this analysis with some of the features of Japanese culture of which we already saw that it is an exceptional case in East Asia. There is a vast literature on the ‘East Asian miracle’ and indeed in section A we saw that there are some general features that the economically fast growing countries of East Asia share. We saw several patterns that suggest an East Asian model of development. However, when we looked at industrial organization, these countries did not turn out to be as similar as the idea of an East Asian miracle or development model suggest. The Chinese economy is bifurcated between large-scale state enterprises and small-scale family enterprises, a structure that is intimately linked with the traditional culture of the country, which it shares with Taiwan, Singapore and Korea. Japan by contrast, has a considerable amount of large-scale private enterprises that have been a persistent feature of the country for several centuries. If it is indeed the case that features of traditional culture are the source of the dominance of the family enterprise in Chinese societies and the weakness of large-scale professional private enterprises, then such features must be absent in Japan and its traditional culture must be different. We will first describe Japan’s industrial structure and then look at how it is informed by different traditions than those of China.

We saw that business organizations in China are organized along personal ties or *guanxi*, whereas in South Korea they are organized in the business groups or *chaebol*. The functional equivalent of these two in Japan is the *keiretsu*. The next table depicts the differences among these forms of organization.

*Table of Patterns of Organization in East Asia*

	Type of Corporation	Basis of Corporation	Family Influence	Size	Origins
China	Guanxi	Family ties	High	SME	Confucian family ties
Korea	Chaebol	Professional	Moderate	Large	Government policy
Japan	Keiretsu	Professional	Low	Large	Zaibatsu organizations

The most common form is the horizontal *keiretsu* which consists of a group of companies centred around a large bank. Apart from the bank, it usually consists of a general trading company, an insurance company, a heavy manufacturing firm, an electronics firm, a chemical

company, an oil company, various commodity producers and a shipping firm. These firms are linked through cross-shareholding.<sup>234</sup> These conglomerates represent a very large share of the Japanese economy and one distinguishing feature about them is that they cooperate strongly through trade and the provision of resources. Loyalty within the *keiretsu* is very strong and in contrast with Chinese and Korean groups, the influence of family relations in policy or ownership is negligible within the *keiretsu*. However, the *keiretsu* did originate from enterprises in which family relations were more important, the so-called *zaibatsu*. These were the industrial conglomerates that Japan had up until the end of the Second World War when they were dismantled by the United States as they were associated with Japan's wartime militarism. Up until that time, ownership of the *zaibatsu* was largely in hands of the founding family. These old structures of ownership were broken up by Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) and professional groups assumed the positions of these families. After the war, the existing structures of the *zaibatsu* were reconstructed into the post-war *keiretsu*. Now although ownership was often still in the hands of wealthy families, it is important to note that even the pre-war *zaibatsu* were managed largely by people outside the founding family and that were recruited on the basis of professional impersonal criteria. In stark contrast with Chinese businesses, there was a socially accepted norm that family members should not take over a company as this would have perverse effects on the company. What is the origin of this different conception of enterprise and the family? If it is the case that features of traditional culture animate the Chinese way of doing business, we should expect to find sources in Japan's traditional culture that differ strongly from this. What are the sources of the Japanese enterprise?

We already saw in section A that the samurai ethic was a source of the loyalty and a professional ethic of bureaucrats in Japan. There it was a force of obligation and service to a figure or institution that stood above all other particularistic allegiances. Not only has this ethic been formative for the bureaucracy, but during the Tokugawa period (1600-1868) the merchant class also was imbued with this ethic. This is for instance illustrated by the *bushido*-like house rules of the samurai Iwasaki, founder of Mitsubishi:

Article 1. Do not be preoccupied with small matters but aim at the management of large enterprises

Article 2. Once you start an enterprise be sure to succeed in it.

Article 3. Do not engage in speculative enterprises.

Article 4. Operate all enterprises with the national interest in mind.

Article 5. Never forget the pure spirit of public service and makoto.

Article 6. Be hard-working and frugal, and thoughtful to others.

Article 7. Utilize proper personnel

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<sup>234</sup> F. Fukuyama, *Trust*, p. 197 and M. Castells, *The Network Society*, pp. 190-191

Article 8. Treat your employees well.

Article 9. Be bold in starting an enterprise but meticulous in its prosecution.<sup>235</sup>

Another source of attachment to professional and impersonal organization beyond the family is the so-called *iemoto*-structure, which refers to the heads of different social groups in Japanese society. It is particularly applied to groups in the traditional arts and crafts like archery, swordsmanship, tea ceremony, and Noh theatre. Like Western associations, these groups transcend the family sphere. These groups are hierarchically ruled by the heads of these groups. It has been argued that such structures pervade Japanese society and particularly its religious sphere which is strongly organized and sectarian in character.<sup>236</sup> This contrast with for instance the more family-like structure in Chinese martial arts, where a master would often only teach his most advanced techniques to members of his family.

A form of professionalization more specifically linked to the world of business is the figure of the *banto*. This was a figure, often from outside the family, who was hired as an executive to oversee a family business. This practice was established already in Japan before the country's industrialization after 1868.

We have stressed the sources in traditional Japanese culture that differ from the familism of Chinese society. There has of course also been much interaction between the two and specifically the influence of China on Japan has been notable. Both Confucianism and Buddhism have been imported in Japan from China. However, it is important to note that when Confucianism was imported to Japan, it was made consistent with *bushido* and general Japanese culture. The filial piety of Confucianism for instance was made secondary to loyalty. Lucian Pye argued that in China achievement found its fulfillment in the family and its obligations were lifelong (see earlier note), whereas in Japan "the training of the child in filial piety is so that he may fulfil loyalty as an adult".<sup>237</sup>

In sum, we have focused specifically on China to show how its traditional culture affected its industrial structure. The strength of the Chinese family is an obstacle to the development of large-scale private companies. However, it also gives particular strengths to the Chinese economy. Capitalism in China is shaped by the Chinese family. We have also looked at how Japan has more traditions of cooperation outside the family and this provides the basis for its highly concentrated industrial structure. Traditional patterns of social cooperation and authority shape the way economies are organized.

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<sup>235</sup> Cited from R. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, New York: The Free Press, 1985 (1957), p. 187

<sup>236</sup> F. Fukuyama, *Trust*, pp. 176-177

<sup>237</sup> R. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*, p. 93

### **C). Democracy: Insiders and Outsiders**

#### *Introduction: Divergence of Democracies*

We will now turn to the last contemporary phenomenon of which we will argue that traditional culture shapes the universal structures of modernity. In the previous two sections, we have seen this dynamic in three of the four fields of universal modernization that we distinguished in the course of chapter I. Section A explicitly dealt with the third field of the state and its institutions. Although there is a universal trend towards centralization and bureaucratization of the state, the specific shape this takes is informed by local traditions. Such traditions give strength and authority to the state in East Asia, but much less so in Latin America. The state has assumed a different role in the modernization of these different regions. By looking in that section at the impact of the state in developing the economy of countries, we also touched upon the first field of universal modernization, that of economic development. We dealt with this field more explicitly in section B, when we looked at industrial structure. Within the universal pattern of liberalization and stages of economic growth, countries differed in the composition of types of corporations, dependent on types of policies favoured by politicians, the strength of social actors, but also the strength of the family versus other social relations. With this last dimension, we also came across the second field of universal development, that of socio-demographics. Next to the universal movement towards urbanization, literacy and horizontal contract relations, traditional culture still shapes the patterns of social interaction.

We have not yet seen to what extent traditional culture shapes modernity in the fourth field of regime type. We only came across this phenomenon negatively, when we discussed the theory of Asian Values in section A. Against the defenders of this theory, we argued that Asian Values do not provide a case against the universal spread of democracy. But is there also variation *within* the working of universal democracy, that can be attributed to traditional culture? To this phenomenon, we will turn in this section. When looking at how traditional culture shapes modern democracy, we will see that this is again linked with traditional patterns of social relations and thus also the structure of socio-demographics, our second field of inquiry in chapter I. Specifically, we will discuss how this is related to the factor of trust, with which we ended our discussion in the previous section. The same factor of high or low trust and the character of relations with family and non-kin, to which we attributed differences in industrial structure, also impact the character of democracy.

In this section, we will look at two countries, that are of particular interest for our investigation, Italy and India. Italy is interesting because, as we saw, although it is one country, it has within its borders quite different regions. We will first look at how overall Italian traditional culture relates to democracy and then explore how the regions with different historical legacies have not only shown differences in economic performance, but also in the strength of democratic governance. India is particularly interesting, because it is an anomaly

that we came across in chapter I. In I.D we saw that democratization is strongly linked with a high level of economic development. India however, has a very low level of economic development, but an impressive record of democratic politics in a country with more than a billion people. We did not argue the strong case in chapter I, that democracy cannot work without a high level of per capita wealth, but we did see that as countries become more wealthy and has a sizable middle class, democracy has a higher chance of survival in the long-term. We will see that India's strength in maintaining democratic politics at such a low level of development has to do with the country's traditional culture. This universal structure can be maintained in the country because it is interwoven with specific local traditions.

### **1). Trusting Italians**

In the previous section, we looked at how differences between countries in terms of trust impact and shape their economic development. Specifically, we looked at the impact on industrial organization. A strong family-centric society in which trust of non-kin is low leads to a prevalence of the family firm and keeps firm size relative small. Countries with traditions of wider spheres of trust have greater ease in developing large-scale professional companies. This same dimension also has an impact on the field of politics. Universal modernization entails a movement towards democracy. The character of democracy, and specifically its quality, is strongly impacted by levels of trust. Democratic regimes are greatly strengthened by the presence of a variety of forms of social organization. A low level of trust, in for instance a family-centric society, leads to less vibrant social organization.

The impact of factors like trust on the working of a political regime is investigated by the political culture approach, which was spearheaded by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's 1963 classic *The Civic Culture*.<sup>238</sup> They did a cross-country analysis of indicators of civic culture and related those to the working of democracy in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Mexico. They looked at factors ranging from the awareness of politics (through for instance the reading of newspapers), national pride, voting participation, to views on the competence of politicians and administrators, feelings of responsiveness and membership of voluntary associations.

Almond and Verba make an interesting distinction in three types of political culture, that we will also come back to in the next chapter. A political culture that is parochial is one in which people score low on all of the mentioned indicators. People have little expectations of the

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<sup>238</sup> G.A. Almond, S. Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1989 (1963)

government, little awareness of what goes on in politics and do not participate in civil associations or seek to influence the public realm. Such a political culture is typical of very traditional societies like tribal communities. Secondly, in a subject political culture, people do have an orientation towards the broader political system. They have an awareness of the polity and its impact on their lives, but their relation to it is passive. They are not actively engaged in influencing politics. This is the case with the third, participant political culture. Here people are aware of the political system, are knowledgeable about its impact and they are also active in shaping it. In every polity, there is a mix between these three types of political culture and they do not exclude each other. Polities however, do vary in the composition of this mix.

The prevalence of the different types of political culture determines the quality of the civic culture that underpins the democratic system of a country. The divergence in types of political culture in turn stems from differences in history and traditions. The United States and Great Britain have the strongest and most vibrant democratic systems and also score highest on the indicators of civic culture. Yet whereas in the U.S. the participant dominates over the subject, in Great Britain, the reverse is the case. This can in the U.S. be traced to historical experience of revolt to the British Crown and the American tradition of distrust of political influence. In Britain by contrast, there is a more deferential political culture. Active participation does not replace or weaken the role of subject. Having a history of capable government before the age of mass participation, there is a stronger sense in the country of the independent authority of the government than in the U.S. Historical experience also shaped political culture in Germany and Mexico. In the former, strong awareness of the public sphere is complemented with weak participation, resulting from the political turmoil of the country's history. In Mexico, the experience of corruption following the active state that emerged from the Mexican Revolution (see section A) has bred alienation from the system.

For our interests here it is important to focus more on the case of Italy. From the investigation follows an alienated political culture. Italians scored low on national pride, active participation, and had a low sense of competence in political affairs and confidence in the social environment. Again, this can be related to historical experience and traditions. Italy's history is characterized by fragmentation (the country was not unified until 1870) and external tyranny. And the *Risorgimento* that led to Italian unification was accompanied by the saying: "We have made Italy, now we must make Italians".<sup>239</sup> In subsequent history, nationalism became identified with defeat and constitutionalism and democracy with ineffectiveness. Moreover, the study suggests that Italy also suffers from social alienation. Most Italians view their social environment as full of threat and danger.<sup>240</sup> Italian culture is strongly shaped by the family and trust beyond the family is low. This is something that is vividly depicted in mafia movies, where the utmost loyalty is expected within the family, while outside the family all means are justified. It is a view that comes close to another classic of Edward

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<sup>239</sup> This development is documented in C. Dugan, *A Concise History of Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008 (1994), see specifically p. 145-146

<sup>240</sup> G.A. Almond, S. Verba, *The Civic Culture*, p. 309



Banfield, who investigated an Italian village he called Montegrano. He describes an “inability of the villagers to act together for their common good or, indeed, for any end transcending the immediate material interest of the nuclear family”.<sup>241</sup> The ethic that the villagers adhered was dubbed ‘amoral familism’ by Banfield, an ethic in which people follow the following rule: “Maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; assume that all others will do likewise.”<sup>242</sup> The conclusion of Almond and Verba is that Italy does not have the political culture to support a working democracy.

The strong influence of the family and the weakness of trust outside the family corresponds with what we saw in section B, when we looked at the field of economics. There we saw an overall low level of industrial concentration in Italy and the prevalence of small- and medium-sized enterprises, just like in China and Taiwan. Yet there we also saw a considerable difference between regions in the country. Whereas in the south of Italy, ‘familism’ was amoral, and associated with weak economic development, the north of the country had a vibrant and sophisticated economy, driven strongly by the small- and medium-sized enterprises. The studies of Banfield and Almond and Verba were conducted in the early phases of Italy’s tremendous postwar economic growth. From the nineteen-fifties to the nineteen-eighties, a strong development of industrialization, dubbed locally ‘Il Boom’, unfolded in the country. It was mostly in the northern and central regions of Italy around the Po Valley that this development took place. Locally, complex industries emerged and specialized in different districts. Milan focused on fashion and broader clothing, and Turin was the home base of FIAT, the country’s largest automobile maker. Within the region of Emilia-Romagna, there developed a machine manufacturing district in Bologna, an agricultural machinery cluster in Reggio-Emilia, ceramics production in Modena, food and food processing machinery in Parma, a medical instruments cluster in Mirandola and a garment industry around Carpi. Moreover, the packaging machinery cluster in Bologna is characterized by a great spreading of the production process over a host of small firms and subcontractors. By far the most firms have less than 50 employees (and of this group most have less than 15 employees), which employ 32% of total employment the sector.<sup>243</sup>

What this seems to suggest is that although the whole of Italy is characterized by a centrality of the family (leading to a low level of industrial concentration), this can have a diverse economic impact. Inter-firm cooperation is very high in the Northern and Central Italian regions, suggesting that the dynamic of trust differs among Italian regions. The extreme low level of trust outside the family seems to be more applicable to the south, that is also home to the most powerful Italian mafia’s. This divergence in levels of trust between Italian regions is corroborated by recent research of the European Values Studies. These studies investigate a variety of values throughout Europe and correlate it with economic and political indicators. In

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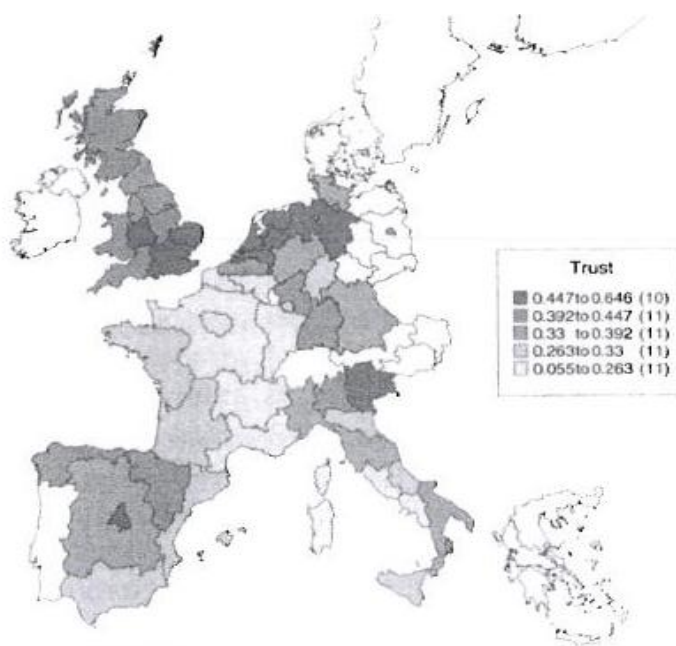
<sup>241</sup> E. Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, pp. 9-10

<sup>242</sup> Idem, p. 83

<sup>243</sup> H. Farrell, *The Political Economy of Trust: Institutions, Interests, and Inter-Firm Cooperation in Italy and Germany*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 76-81

one survey, people from different European regions were asked the following question: ‘Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?’ The regions were then ranked according to the level of general trust that they expressed. The picture below shows the result.

*Map of Trust in Western Europe*<sup>244</sup>



The picture shows that levels of trust are overall higher in Northern Europe than in the south. The highest scores are in the Netherlands and parts of England and Germany. But whereas in the Netherlands there is not much divergence between regions (with the east of the country having the highest overall score in Europe, where 64.6% believe that other people can generally be trusted), we also see a strong divergence within Italy. The northern regions have the same level of trust as those regions moving from the origin of the river Rhine upwards and the region Nord Est falls in the highest cohort of level of trust. By contrast, trust is much

<sup>244</sup> W. Arts, J. Hagenaars, L. Halman (eds), *The Cultural Diversity of the European Union: Findings, Explanations and Reflections from the European Values Study*, Leiden: Koninklijke Brill n.v., 2003, p. 128. Based on one question, this map is of course only a rough approximation of overall levels of trust in Europe. Maps drawn from other surveys convey a quite similar picture.

lower in the south and Sardinia scores lowest in Europe, with only 5.5% saying that people can generally be trusted.

We should expect this divergence in levels of trust between Italian regions not only to have a bearing on economic development, but also on politics, i.e. the quality of democracy. Such an effect does seem to exist. Whereas it is easy to discern diverse between regions in a country in terms of economic development, this is much harder in the field of politics, due to the unitary structure of governance. This was particularly hard to do when Almond and Verba conducted their study, as Italy was then a highly centralized polity. The central state still has much power in Italy, but in the course of the nineteen-seventies, a radical project of decentralization was followed, with much discretionary power moving towards regional authorities. We would expect that the quality of governance should differ between regions, linked to the levels of trust. Almond and Verba's conclusion that Italian political culture does not support democracy should be more applicable to the south than to more northern regions.

The performance of regional authorities throughout Italy was analyzed by Robert Putnam in his *Making Democracy Work*.<sup>245</sup> The conclusions of this study are relevant because they also tie in with our investigation of the universal structures of modernity as well as show how these structures require a local culture that supports and underpin them, a theme we will take up elaborately in the concluding part of this chapter.

Putnam found that the institutional performance of regions in Italy differed strongly along the North-South gradient. All regions north of the centre had better performances than those south of the centre. The highest scores were in the regions of Umbria and Emilia-Romagna, whereas the southern regions of Calabria and Campania scored lowest.

This divergence in the institutional performance of regions seems also to be related to the difference in the level of wealth that we already mentioned. All of the northern regions have a higher level of wealth as well as better institutional performance. Instead of levels of trust being the basis for both, the alternative seems then also possible, that it is the level of wealth that explains the better quality of democratic institutions. This is indeed the argument of Modernization Theory and we showed how this correlation exists globally in chapter I.D. This would mean that levels of trust are not so much a cause of patterns of modernization as a consequence of modernization. As we argued, economic modernization fosters horizontal relations, which in turn support democracy. Although this dynamic certainly does hold, the picture from the regions of Italy show a more complex dynamic. Although the correlation between level of wealth and institutional performance is strong (77%), there is considerable divergence within this pattern. To be more precise, among low economically developed regions, some of the poorest regions have higher scores of institutional performance than more developed regions. And among high economically developed regions, the most developed among them have lower scores on institutional performance than less wealthy

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<sup>245</sup> R.D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993

regions. For instance, the industrial triangle in the North of Lombardia, Piemonte and Liguria (which host cities like Milan, Turin and Genoa) have the highest economic development, yet their institutional performance is lower than that of less wealthy Umbria and Emilia-Romagna.<sup>246</sup> Economic development can thus by itself not explain the quality of democracy.

Yet if we look at the factor of social capital, to which trust belongs, there are much less anomalies. Measuring civic culture through indicators like those discussed above (newspaper readership, amount and type of voluntary organization, involvement with politics and voting) shows a pattern that overlaps with the institutional performance of different regions.

In understanding the quality of democracy in Italy, we need, next to the dynamic described by Modernization Theory that links it with economic development, also resort to the factor of social capital. And this factor in turn needs to be understood in the context of historical experience and the culture and traditions it created. In this sense, the North and South of Italy differed strongly.

After the fall of the Roman Empire and the disintegration of political order on the peninsula, the regions came to fall under two empires (Byzantine in the South, German in the North), of which the effect on both was not very different. As these empires waned in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the political fate of the two regions started to diverge radically.

With the decline of the Byzantine empire, self-rule was short-lived in the South of Italy as Norman invaders under Roger II in 1130 united the region in a new political order. Especially also his successor Frederick II made many positive contributions to the region. The rule was considered enlightened, violence was monopolized by the state and the stimulation of art and learning at the court led to it being dubbed 'a republic of scholars'. On the other hand, the instituted regime was also highly autocratic and lacking in accountability. The Emperor himself was declared appointed by God, but also the decisions of barons were considered sacred. As the power of the central empire became weaker, the aristocracy became more powerful at the detriment of other social groups. The region was marked by a very poor peasantry and weak cities with small middle classes. A pattern was created that would last for centuries.

The experience of the North of Italy could not be more different. As empire waned in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, a long tradition of local self-government emerged that was characterized by horizontal cooperation. Associations emerged that were held together by oaths and law. Bologna, which had the world's first university became famous for the study of law. Of course, it has to be noted that the regimes that emerged here were far from democratic as much of the population was not included and the aristocracy played an important role in them. However, participation was at the time the broadest in all of the West, there was considerable social mobility and the power of the aristocracy was weaker than in many other parts of Europe, especially when compared to Southern Italy. Important among the emerging

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<sup>246</sup> Idem, pp. 83-86

associations were the guilds. The oldest guild-stature, that of Verona of 1303, speaks of fraternal assistance, hospitality to strangers and help in the case of adversity. Other forms of voluntary horizontal cooperation were the neighborhood associations (*vicinanze*), parish organization (*populus*), confraternities, and societies providing for mutual security (*consorterie*). On top of these civil communities, commerce expanded (with the emergence of credit) and the trade empires of the northern Italian cities emerged. In the northern most regions, during the 14<sup>th</sup> century local despots (*signori*) came to dominate politics, but in the more central northern regions, self-government persisted.

These long legacies of self-government and cooperation shaped the higher level of trust that is characteristic of Italy's northern regions. They spawned a culture and traditions that survived contrary developments. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century for instance, international dynastic struggle had come to dominate politics in the North of Italy. But whereas politically rule became external, socially a civic culture persisted around hospitals, municipal clerks and other forms of mutual cooperation.

The different cultures that emerged in the regions explain the differences in the quality of contemporary democracy. The political history in the southern part of Italy of authoritarianism undermined widespread cooperation between people and created the 'amoral familism', or low level of trust. This lacking civic community in turn explains the poor performance of its democratic institutions. The presence of such a civic community in the North explain its better performance. Moreover, it explains it better than the theory of Modernization Theory that links democratic performance to economic development. We saw that the industrial triangle of the North was more wealthy than other northern regions, but scored lower than several others in terms of democratic performance. The weakening of the civic communities in these regions by the signori since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, versus their persistence in other regions can explain this divergence.

The emphasis on civic traditions ties in with an old line of reasoning in philosophy, one adherent on which was an Italian that wrote as tyranny was sweeping Italy. Niccolò Machiavelli argued that republican regimes can only survive if there is a virtuous population. Freedom cannot be given by political design if the population does not have the concomitant virtuous culture.<sup>247</sup> Moreover, a measure of equality is required for the functioning of a republic. A later important philosopher in this field was Alexis de Tocqueville. On the basis of the existence of higher or lower levels of equality, he traced a variety of differences in politics (specifically democracy) and social order between the United States and France.<sup>248</sup> It was the American 'art of association' that determines the country's democratic capacity. Indeed, in many senses Tocqueville's description of the difference between France and the U.S. parallels the differences between North and South Italy. Putnam for instance mentions

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<sup>247</sup> N. Machiavelli, *Discorsi: Gedachten over Staat en Politiek (Derde, herziene druk)*, Amsterdam: Ambo, 1997, pp. 146-149

<sup>248</sup> A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America (Vintage Books Edition)*, New York: Vintage Classics, 1990

that in the North the authoritarian character of the Catholic Church was weakened by the rise of lay associations and priests were not superior to others, but acted as servants of the community.<sup>249</sup> This compares with Tocqueville's analysis that in America religion has been fused with everyday concerns and that "the American clergy know and respect the intellectual supremacy exercised by the majority".<sup>250</sup>

What we have seen in this section is that traditional culture not only underpins a structure of modernity (democracy), but like in other sections when we spoke of the developmental state and the large professionalized corporation, that these structures of modernity require such a culture for their strength and functioning. In the last section of this chapter we will turn to the general implications of this, but first we will turn to our last case study, the functioning of democracy in India.

## **2). India's Polytheist Democracy**

The second case in which we will argue for the impact of traditional culture in shaping the structures of democracy is India. The country still has a low level of economic development, a large part of its population live below the poverty line and its per capita income is less than half that of China. Yet, in contrast with the latter, India has an impressive record of democratic governance. In chapter I, we saw that the likelihood of the long-term survival of democracy is much smaller when a country has a low level of economic development. Although many developing countries initiated democratic politics after independence, in most poor countries, their democratic record has been poor. Communist revolutions, military dictatorships and nationalist movements have swept away democratic politics in many developing countries. After its independence, many theorists also believed India would not be able to sustain democracy due to the structural problems of the country. Selig Harrison for instance, predicted that the divisions in India would lead to increased conflicts, which in the end could endanger the unity of the country.<sup>251</sup>

Yet, India's democratic record stands out among developing countries. Of course, it also has its flaws. Throughout most of its post-independence period, it has been ruled by one party, the Indian Congress Party. Corruption and the power of families over the political system are also serious issues and Indira Gandhi did attempt to suspend democracy and rule by emergence

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<sup>249</sup> R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, p. 127

<sup>250</sup> A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, p. 27

<sup>251</sup> S. Harrison, *India: The Dangerous Decades*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960

decree. However, shortly after she attempted this, she was defeated at the polls. And although the Congress Party has been dominant, it did cede power to the BJP, who ruled the country from 1998 to 2004, after which the Congress Party came to power again. Attachment to democratic politics is strong amongst Indian politicians, but also among other strong societal actors, like the military. Certain Indian states have Maoist rebels, but on a national level, there are no challengers of democracy. With over a billion people, India is the largest democracy in the world.

This is all the more surprising, if we compare it with Northern Italy, of which we saw that it also has strong democratic credentials. We saw there, that it was characterized by a higher degree of equality than in Southern Italy. India, by contrast, is characterized by very high inequality. This is not only the case with regard to income distribution, but also socially, due to the caste system. With such a large part of the population in a weak position, one would expect that implementing democracy would lead to revolution. Instead, we see a great degree of stability in Indian politics. What explains this paradox?

One important factor is something India's traditions do share with Northern Italy, its lack of centralization. Although there have been large empires in Indian history, they did not reach the level of centralized organization that European states, let alone China, did. Throughout Indian history, there has been a great deal of relative autonomy of local rule as well as of other social groups like castes or professional groups. Apart from a system of taxation, these groups had a high degree of self-regulation in traditional India.<sup>252</sup> This is strongly connected with the conception of the place of the political in Indian culture.

In contrast with the (Continental) European concept of sovereignty and the central place of the emperor in China, a fractured concept of sovereignty emerged in India, that did not elevate politics to a sphere of its own, above the rest of society. This concept emphasized the multiple rights of different societal groups, rather than a unitary concept of the power of the state or of society.<sup>253</sup> In this sense, India resembles the political constitution of the United States. Hannah Arendt has argued that in contrast with France, the U.S. rejected a unified sovereign in favor of a plurality of forces.<sup>254</sup> Moreover, these sub-centers of power in India were not organized tightly around the achievement of political goals, but were instead loosely organized around religious authorities, shrines, schools and sects. This lack of a paramount status for the political meant that the political arena could not, in Samuel Eisenstadt's terms, become the location for the "implementation of the transcendental vision of this civilization".<sup>255</sup> Politics was important for order, but held no possibility for the realization of the ultimate good of Indian culture. The overall culture was not defined in terms of politics

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<sup>252</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations & Multiple Modernities*, p. 801

<sup>253</sup> Idem, p. 790

<sup>254</sup> H. Arendt, *On Revolution*, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1990 (1963), pp. 141-178

<sup>255</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations & Multiple Modernities*, p. 786

and even grand empires, like that of the Gupta and Maurya, had to accommodate and give way to other sources of authority. It has been in terms of religion that the ultimate good of Indian culture has been defined, through either ritual or renunciation. Of course, politics was important and without order, the good could not be realized. But it was in terms of the observance of ritual that politics was defined, rather than as a paramount sphere.

Indian culture is characterized by a sharp distinction between religious authority and political power. Of the four general castes (*varnas*), the *Brahmans* are the religious leaders, but this did not give them political power or great material wealth. The caste of princes and warriors, the *Kshatriya*'s, held political power, but were distinctly secondary in the social order.<sup>256</sup> This separation of politics from religion thus exempted the world of politics from overall societal and moral concerns emanating from religion. This meant according to Lucian Pye, that political leaders were less bound by morality, but it also meant that the political centre was pragmatic and accommodative. One outcome of this has been the absence of religious wars in Indian history. Of course, there have been conflicts between the adherents of different religions, but this never led to an all-out mobilization of contrary religious camps, with the intention of forcefully defeating and converting another religion. Indian politics has not necessarily been very peaceful, but it has been less ideological than in for instance monotheist cultures or on China. Indian history has known movements that were critical of its social organization. Buddhism, the Bhakti movement and Jainism all emphasized equality to a greater degree than Hinduism. However, the equality they aspired was mostly located in the religious sphere, like access to worship, and did not involve strong demands for the realization of new, more equal, political organization.<sup>257</sup>

Although the implementation of modern political structures did involve a greater centralization and elevation of politics (and thus also bringing ideological and religious struggle more to the fore<sup>258</sup>), India's contemporary political system is still highly characterized by dispersed power and an accommodative center. It is a decentralized network of complex relations, of which the centre is evasive, comparable to the country's polytheist universe. Rather than along ideological ties, Indian politics is characterized by personal networks from the local level all the way up to the central state.<sup>259</sup> The Indian Congress Party too, holds together diverse political and religious orientations pragmatically within its fold. At

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<sup>256</sup> L. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics*, p. 136

<sup>257</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations & Multiple Modernities*, p. 794

<sup>258</sup> The partition of India and Pakistan for instance led to religious clashes between Hindus and Muslims. Interestingly though, Mahatma Gandhi countered this political conflict with non-political means by starting a hunger strike until the clashes had ceased. Also his doctrine of non-violent struggle (*ahimsa*) against England went against the type of organized political opposition that was characteristic of other colonies. The prominence of figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru in India's struggle for independence fostered the idea in India that the country was ruled by saints, when other parts of the world were in the shadow of Hitler and Stalin. See G. Das, *India Unbound*, p. 4

<sup>259</sup> The country's politics of power-sharing have been described by Arendt Lijphart as consociational.



times for instance, the three most important political functions in the country, the prime minister, the president and the leader of the Congress Party, have been divided among a Hindu, a Muslim and a Sikh, the three most numerous religions of the country. The highly popular prime minister of India, Manmohan Singh, is a Sikh. The secular character of the Indian state draws strongly on the country's indigenous tradition of religious toleration.<sup>260</sup> We can see this 'otherworldly' orientation of Indian religion, and the way it is distanced from politics by comparing it with Chinese religiosity. Lucian Pye, also quoting Dharendra Narain, vividly describes this difference, making it worth quoting him in full:

The Confucian values of *jen* and *li* demanded a humanitarian approach to personal relationships. But the Hindu ideal of self-cultivation has been in the direction of spiritual attainment and withdrawal from human relationships. The Chinese universe is centered on mankind and secular concerns, while at the center of the Hindu universe is the Absolute. The Chinese sages sought wisdom in balancing good with evil, thus achieving harmony and reliability in human affairs. The Hindu saint on the contrary "renounces the normal human emotions of love and attachment and abjures sex. To remain detached is his ideal; any sign of attachment in himself is evidence of his weakness. Whereas the Chinese sage is recognizable as a human being, a Hindu saint is not."<sup>261</sup>

And whereas both Chinese and Indian culture emphasize the separation of emotion from action, in China this is done to become more effective in action and human interaction, whereas in India it is done to make the world of action irrelevant.

This "otherworldly" and inner focus of religion not only makes politics less ideological and more accommodative, but it is also associated with the tolerance of different lifestyles in India. One of the most striking features of Indian streets is the tremendous diversity exhibited by people. Especially in contrast with North East Asian societies, Indians display a greater variety of colors as well as walks of life, that do not seem to take offence of each other. Of course, there is a social system that is very hierarchical and locks people in a certain social position, but the religious orientation provides a form of counterbalance to the low esteem that this social system places on many. Apart from the outward activity, which is clearly ranked in India, there is also a strong inner dimension to actions, sanctioned by religion. This inner dimension is by outward activity fulfilling one's personal obligation, or *svadharma*. This conscientious fulfilling of personal *dharma* cuts across social distinctions and has value for all. Indian mythology is for instance filled with examples of women who, while in Indian tradition being subservient to men, through the fulfillment of their duties to their husband gained incredible powers that neither saints nor even gods could counter. One story relates this even to a woman who worked as a courtesan. In the story a king, seeing the might of the river Ganges, laments man's insignificance and asks whether any man is capable of making

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<sup>260</sup> A. Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, pp. 16-21

<sup>261</sup> L. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics*, pp. 152-153

the river reverse its flow. Then the courtesan addresses the river and asks that the river reverse its flow if she had fulfilled her *dharma* as a courtesan, without any distinction between the men she was with, giving her body similarly to all. The river first paused, and then started to flow backward. Sudhir Kakar relates this appreciation for the *dharma* that everyone has to fulfill to the Indian tolerance of diverse walks of life. A not uncommon view in Indian streets are for instance the groups of transvestites, dressed as females, who live off prostitution and donations on festive occasions. Not only do these outstanding groups walk freely in the streets, but they also have their own shrines and trace their walk of life back to the mythical Arjuna, the great warrior, who had to become his opposite and spent a year living as a female dance teacher. But the diversity of Indian streets also comes from professional beggars, faith healers and sadhus who walk around clothed only 'in the infinite'.<sup>262</sup> This appreciation of everyone's *dharma* does not lead to a political recognition of equality, but it does provide a strong basis for toleration.

Pluralism (though not equality) has thus been the norm in Indian culture. This can be seen in the dominant religion of Hinduism. Amartya Sen has drawn attention to the fact that Hinduism has a powerful history of story-telling with the colossal religious texts of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. The former is for instance several times as voluminous as the Bible and seven times as long as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* put together. Rather than espousing a unitary doctrine, these texts are filled with dialogues, dilemmas, debates, alternative perspectives and doubts.<sup>263</sup> In another important religious text, the Rigveda, scepticism and doubt are expressed on religious matters:

Who really knows? Who will here proclaim it? Whence was it produced? Whence is this creation? The gods came afterwards, with the creation of this universe. Who then knows whence it has arisen?

Whence this creation has arisen – perhaps it formed itself, or perhaps it did not – the one who looks down on it, in the highest heaven, only he knows – or perhaps he does not know.<sup>264</sup>

The shifting of perspectives is pervasive in Hindu culture. Childhood in India involves learning complex sets of taboos, rituals and contradictory ideas. In mythology, gods are both creators and destroyers, both male and female, and gods as well as humans are both honest and treacherous.<sup>265</sup> Instead of precise standards of behavior and a morality that distinguishes clearly good and evil, Indian culture and morality is characterized much more by ambiguity.

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<sup>262</sup> S. Kakar, *The Inner World: A Psycho-analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, p. 39

<sup>263</sup> A. Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, p. 3

<sup>264</sup> Quoted in *idem*, p. 22

<sup>265</sup> L. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics*, p. 150

Moral categories have a more relative character, making it impossible to know in an absolute sense whether something is good or not. It is also the sense that is conveyed by the *Mahabharata*, this grand epos ends with the last of the righteous brothers finds his brothers suffering in the afterlife. The constant shift of positions results in a morality that is more permissive and gentle, but also more ambiguous, which according to Kakar, is not governed by thou-shalt and thou-shalt-not, but by a thou-canst-but-try.<sup>266</sup>

*Ardhanari, the deity composed half of Shiva, half of his wive Shakti*



The prevalence of debate and dialogue has not only been the domain of Hindu elites. In the religious texts, there are also often female interlocutors and people from lower social groups. And it is not only within Hinduism, but also in the other religions of India, and between them, that there is a long tradition of argument and debate. Shortly after the death of Buddha for instance, great 'Buddhist councils' were held, some of the world's earliest open general meetings. The Buddhist emperor Ashoka of the Maurya dynasty organized open discussions at the court between different religions. These discussions had to follow rules that required restraint from all parties and the giving of proper respect to all religious sects. This practice was also followed under Muslim rule by the Mughal emperor Akbar. He held dialogues between different faiths and strived for the pursuit of reason rather than reliance on tradition. Akbar laid the basis for modern India's secular state by formulating the religious neutrality of

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<sup>266</sup> S. Kakar, *The Inner World*, p. 37

the state. He also stated that no one should be interfered with on account of religion and all were free to convert as they pleased.<sup>267</sup>

The presence and toleration of plurality as well as the strong tradition of dialogue, made heterodoxy the norm in India. There emerged a culture of public reasoning, which underpins India's modern democracy as it created what Amartya Sen has dubbed 'the argumentative Indian'.

## **D). The Non-Modern Elements of Modernity: Multiple Modernities**

### **1). Disaggregating Modernity**

In the last section of this chapter, we will draw the general conclusions from the cases that we discussed in the previous three sections. In these sections, we saw that elements of traditional culture persist in the contemporary world. Moreover, this did not concern a form of conservation at the margins of contemporary society, but instead we saw that these elements of traditional culture actually tied in with the central structures of modernity that we distinguished in chapter I. And in different degrees, we saw that this connection was crucial to the functioning of the structures of modernity. We saw examples of how the elements of traditional culture gave strength to modernity, by for instance contributing to the competitive advantage of an economy. But we also saw that they even made possible the well functioning of a modern structure, like the state.

We have here a powerful corrective to the argument that we developed in chapter I. There we saw that there is something like a total package of modernity that spreads universally. Arguments that traditional culture inhibits parts of this total package, like the argument from Asian Values that democracy will not spread to this region, have been falsified. However, this does not mean that modernity undermines all local differences. From seeing modernity spread universally, many have argued that a uniform type of man is emerging, or at least that conditions globally are becoming so similar (i.e. that the world is 'a global village' or 'flat'), that location is becoming irrelevant and that all around the world people increasingly live and work in a way that is interchangeable. People may choose different walks of life, but the

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<sup>267</sup> A. Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, pp. 15-18

horizon from which they make their choices is becoming more similar and their thought and behavior will universally conform to that of modern man. The cases of this chapter suggest that this idea is incorrect. *Within* modernity, there are considerable differences emanating from traditional culture. Elements of traditional culture work through on the plain of modernity, shape it, and create different local patterns. The specific character of the structures of modernity was in our discussed cases shaped by this culture. Furthermore, the strength and centrality of certain of these universal modern structures was conditioned on pre-modern sources that underpin them.

In the first part of the section on industrial structure, we saw that the distribution of different types of firms in a country is dependent on the policy choices and paths of development that are taken, as well as the strength of certain societal forces like organized labor and the state. We can thus conclude that within the universal modernization of the economy, there can be considerable diversity in the paths that can be taken. By limiting certain trade and investment flows for instance, a state can contribute to the creation of business groups that can facilitate a local industrial base and more state influence on the direction of the economy. A completely open stance on these trade and investment flows can contribute to a stronger sector of smaller enterprises and a stronger banking sector.

That these options are open, proves that modernity is not that uniform as often presumed, but this still does not go to the core of our interest here. Diverse development paths can result from policies, but we are looking here more specifically at less explicit and consciously chosen factors that determine the path of modernization. We are looking at more structural and deeper laying factors that give shape to the process of modernization.<sup>268</sup> Our other cases showed how elements of traditional culture shaped the process of modernization in different countries. In chapter I.C we saw that there is a universal development towards a rationalized and bureaucratized state. However, in this chapter we saw that the success of this process is linked with traditional culture. Old traditions of respect for officials and a strong ethos of state officials in a pre-modern state created the capacity in certain countries in East Asia for their state to become a developmental state. An absence of such traditions in other countries in for instance Latin America led to the failure of such a project. In the field of socio-demographics we found in chapter I.B a development towards horizontal and rational relations on the basis of free labor and general education. This universal development notwithstanding, we saw in this chapter that much social activity is still conditioned by pre-modern traditions. The strength of civil society is strongly related with the extent to which pre-modern traditions established trust between non-related people. Trust that is restricted mostly to the family also leads to a preponderance of the family firm and hinders the development of professionally managed large-scale firms as we saw when we compared China with Japan. Finally, we saw that the universal development towards democratization in modernity is also affected by traditional culture. Italy is a single country, but the quality of its democratic governance

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<sup>268</sup> We saw that the policy choice of politicians were also informed by deeper structural factors (like the strength of organized labor in Argentina or the strength of the state in Korea). It is this dynamic of structural forces, emanating from traditional culture, which shapes policy choices, that we are primarily interested in.

differs strongly in different regions, dependent on the strength of civil society associations, which in turn depends on long-standing traditions. India stands out as a poor country that has maintained a strong level democratic governance, which draws on the country's pre-modern culture.

The cases we have examined show how on the plain of modernity, there are examples of traditional culture permeating its universal development, leading to different patterns. In the following, we want to broaden our claim. We will argue that beyond these specific examples, pre-modern elements *always* shape the unfolding of modernity. Moreover, these pre-modern elements not just permeate modernity, but they *necessarily underpin* modernity. A pre-modern culture is the basic structure on top of which modernity can develop. Modernity's universal spreading suggests that it is completely detached from any local culture, because it can develop in the most diverse localities. Theorists of modernization and economists too conceptualize the structures of modernity as inhabiting an own separate space, thereby masking the ground on which they stand. Our argument will be that although modernity spread universally, it cannot stand on its own. When it is detached from a specific culture, like Western culture in which it developed, its development in a non-Western region show that it can exist without the Western local culture and its pre-modern traditions. However, it does not imply that modernization can exist without any local culture *tout court*, but rather that it then comes to grow on top of a different local culture. We will argue that modernity always requires a 'nutrient culture' or local 'soil' to grow in. Not only to give the structures of modernity strength, but also to them function basically, they need this basis.

We will make this argument by first turning back to the modern state. In chapter I, we identified it as part of the total package of modernization. Universally, there is a movement of rationalization and bureaucratization of the state. We also saw that this phenomenon was linked to the other fields of modernization. Specifically, we identified a link between the modern state and capitalism. The markets of capitalism require a state in matters like the protection of private property, but the modern state is also forged by capitalism as it needs to administer the societal complexity it creates. That capitalism and bureaucracy go together has often been remarked. But that they join together, does not mean that they stem from the same source. Specifically, we want to argue that the way people operate and are motivated in the market and in the modern state is opposed to each other. Whereas the market exhibits the logic of modernity, the state has a logic that cannot be purely adduced from it. The tension or different character of market and state can be made clear from the way we discussed the difference between the developmental state and the predatory state.

After our social-scientific approach in chapter I, discussing the process of modernization in different fields, we identified a concept of modern man that is complementary to these diverse processes. The concept of modern man that belongs to the rise of modern capitalism is man as seeking to maximize his (enlightened or not) self-interest. The pursuit of self-interest is what drives the market. This is connected with all kinds of other modern developments like the rise

in individualism, the change from relations based on status to those based on contract, and the idea of man as a maximizer of utility.<sup>269</sup> These motivational features of modern man go against those needed for the existence of the modern state. We did see examples of states in which market relations, the pursuit of self-interest and the maximization of utility pervaded the state. This was the case in the predatory state. Yet if the modern state in its Weberian form is to exist (to which East Asian states came close) it has to be autonomous, or more specifically, it has to be driven by an ethic that is different from that of the market. The ethic of the modern state is in some sense connected with that of the market. Its principle of meritocracy is like the logic of the market a rejection of status based on birth and instead depends on individual action and achievement. Yet, the way we described the functioning of the modern state showed a motivation that differs from utility maximization. It was the professionalism of state officials which made it possible for them to act in a coherent and disciplined manner towards the business sector. And apart from formal rules that had to be strictly followed and internalized, we also found that informal networks play an important role in capable states. Officials need to have a strong *esprit de corps*, which can for instance come from having attended the same schools and being socialized there or the coherence of people who entered the administration in the same year.

The tension between the ethic of the market and that of the state can be illustrated through one of the theoretical defenses of the free market. Authors in public choice theory, like James Buchanan, have sought to extend the logic and tools of economics to the field of politics. The concept of man they adhere to, is that of modernity, of man as seeking to maximize utility or self-interest. According to these theorists, bureaucrats and politicians are driven by the same motivation. This leads them to characterize the state as rapacious. States are conceptualized as havens for rent-seeking unhindered by the discipline of the market. Put differently, due to individual optimization, states are prone to foster corruption. It is from this reasoning that public choice theorists have argued for a minimal state and the extension of the market as widely as possible.

However, what these theorists describe is not characteristic of all modern states. In some states, the logic of the market indeed permeates its structure, but this is what we described as the predatory state. The power of the state was for instance used by officials in Latin America to facilitate self-aggrandizement. Bureaucrats did amass wealth by creating rental havens. But for the modern state to function well, and especially if it is capable of behaving like a developmental state as we described, it has to operate from a logic that is different from that of the market. We saw that developmental states were characterized by a high degree of professionalism, which implied letting the public good prevail over private interests. State officials are socialized and internalize the values of their organization. Their perceptions and preferences are shaped by the institutional context and the history of the state. Being socialized in a well-institutionalized state means that officials follow patterns that exist prior to and that overrule their individual self-interest. A high degree of professionalism gives the

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<sup>269</sup> See chapter I.F

state a 'non-utilitarian' character and means that individuals do not behave like utility maximizers.

This holds for developmental states especially, but also less interventionist modern states have to be organized this way. For any modern state to function, with the Weberian professionalism that we described in chapter I (and thus not be a predatory state), it has to be informed by a different ethic than the modern pursuit of self-interest that is associated with the market. It has to be informed by something that is 'non-modern', in the sense that it is independent of the movement of modernity towards the pursuit of (enlightened) self-interest.

We came across certain policies that can be implemented to improve the professionalism of state officials. The low wages for officials in many countries almost forces them to be corrupt, whereas higher salaries can shield them from this temptation. Organizing the state bureaucracy in such a way that politicians do not have much influence on them, through for instance extensive powers of appointment, is another form of policy that can strengthen the state. However, in our discussion of the developmental state, the internal coherence of the state, as well as popular deference to the state, often turned out to draw on pre-modern traditions. Talented students in East Asia aspire to be hired in the bureaucracy as the state has a venerable position in society. This position was strengthened by ancient practices of highly competitive examinations. Service in the state is infused with the feudal ethic of the samurai or the imperial ethic of the bureaucrat-scholar. By contrast, if the state was forged from a tradition of colonial exploitation, if warlords have exerted much political influence and politicians have historically extended their grip on the state for personal aggrandizement, it is much harder to have a disciplined professional state. Thus for a modern state to function and be capable, it requires an ethic that is contrary from the one emanating from modern capitalism and this ethic can draw greatly from a pre-modern culture that counters the pursuit of self-interest.

This pre-modern character of the state is precisely what has led many theorists to neglect the state. Within much of the literature, mostly in the United States in the postwar period, there has been a strong bias towards society or the market. These were considered to be the carriers of modernity and the state was often implicitly held for an archaic structure that would slowly but certainly give way. It was this that prompted Theda Skocpol to 'bring the state back in' the analysis of the contemporary world.<sup>270</sup> This bias has informed both rightist and leftist thought. Liberals standing in the tradition of Herbert Spencer argued that modernity was the spreading of horizontal relations. The modern state was for Spencer in many ways (outside of its pure night watcher role) a remnant of pre-modern vertical relations that would slowly weaken. In the Marxist tradition, there has also been a strong bias against the state. Marx focused on the struggle between societal forces. The state was for Marx not a remnant of the past, but it was entirely permeated by modern societal forces, i.e. class relations. He argued

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<sup>270</sup> T. Skocpol, 'Bringing the State Back in: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research', in: P.B. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, T. Skocpol (eds), *Bringing the State Back in*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 3-37



that the state was nothing but the tool of the oppressing bourgeois. Thus both these rightist and leftist theories assumed the state to be secondary or subservient to societal and market forces. The idea of bringing the state back in stands in a different tradition, of conceptualizing the state as a sphere of its own with its own logic, which dates back to nineteenth-century, mostly German, thought. From Hegel to people like Otto Hintze and later Max Weber, we can find a line of reasoning from which to articulate the autonomous character of the modern state. The contemporary interest in the social-scientific literature in the state, coming from the study of the developmental state in East Asia as well as reappraisals of the work of Max Weber, also stands in a line that the philosopher Oswald Spengler identified. He argued that the study of modernity was done on the basis of ‘English assumptions’, with which he meant a focus on society at the detriment of the state as a driving force in the modern world.<sup>271</sup>

Our investigation of the developmental state has led us to consider the state as a separate institution. For a state to be developmental (so that it can create a modern competitive industrial economy), but also just to perform its basic functions in the Weberian sense, it has to be informed by an ethic that is non-modern, i.e. not characterized by capitalism’s pursuit of self-interest.

We started this section with the assertion that the specific cases we analyzed in this chapter point towards a *general* sense in which the structures of modernity require a basis that is itself not modern. A local culture that is shaped by traditions not just permeates and shapes the manifestations of modernity, but also is the necessary underpinning of modernity. Up to now, we have shown that for the modern state to function, it requires a non-modern culture which is shaped by historically developed traditions. Without such a culture, the wholesale ‘modernization’ of the modern state would undermine its capacity and transform it into a predatory state. Focusing on the state, we have in this section until now assumed the market to be thoroughly modern, i.e. driven by rational self-interest. Next we will see how the market and overall modern horizontal contract relations<sup>272</sup> rely on something that is non-modern. The market and these relations require a context of a different character which makes the pursuit of self-interest possible. Moreover, market activity is much less characterized by this pursuit than generally assumed. Throughout the working of the market, and even for many of its basic features a cultural basis is required.

Our examined cases already provide examples of this. We saw for instance how a culture with a strong focus on the family leads to the prevalence of the family firm in the economy. Moreover, we also looked at the modern large-scale corporation. Whereas authors of Modernization Theory would attribute their existence to the pursuit of rational self-interest in the market place, we saw in our cases that they actually require a culture with a wide radius of trust extended to non-kin to come into existence and endure. Furthermore, when looking at modern democracy, we saw that its strength comes not from the purely individual calculation

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<sup>271</sup> O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, 1145-1146

<sup>272</sup> Identified as a universal force of modernity in sections I.A and I.B /I.D respectively

of preferences, but from long-standing traditions that foster trust among people. How general is this observation on the working of the modern market place, contractual relations and democracy? Is it possible to conceptualize a general structure of these elements of modernity being embedded in something non-modern?

Just as we disentangled the modern state from the total package of modernity and showed how it requires a non-modern basis, the same can be done with regard to the market. From the work of Douglas North and Hernando de Soto we concluded that the protection of private property is a requisite for the modern market economy. These authors belong to the approach of institutional economics and often it has been assumed that this approach is consistent with the modern principle of individual rational self-interest. Indeed, the protection of private property is important, because it is so closely linked to individual maximization. However, that it makes the pursuit of self-interest possible does not make this structure itself characterized by self-interest. Initially, theorists did believe that institutionalism corroborated this principle. Institutions were interpreted in a functionalist way as evolved structures that lower transaction costs and make the maximization of utility possible. However, the institutional approach harbors a view of social reality that is quite different from that of the utilitarian approach. North himself shifted more away from the utilitarian approach as he argued that “institutional frameworks” are “the critical key to the relative success of economies” and that “we have paid a big price for the uncritical acceptance of neoclassical theory”.<sup>273</sup> Economic behavior requires certain institutions. This insight implies that rather than as individuals concerned with maximizing their self-interest, people are shaped by the contexts they inhabit. Furthermore, it is not rational oversight and calculation which primarily informs behavior, but institutions shape the preferences and possible courses of action that individuals have.

These considerations on how institutions shape the market and make it possible, relate to what the sociologist Emile Durkheim called “the non-contractual elements of the contract”. There are features of the modern contract which make it possible, but which themselves are not grounded in contract relations. The institutional setting is one example of this. Another is the influence of relations of trust permeating economic activity that we described in our cases. Generalizing from our cases, such relations exist and shape activity throughout the market. Mark Granovetter has argued that economic theory operates from an undersocialized account of human behavior.<sup>274</sup> Quoting Adam Smith’s critique of cooperation between firms, he shows that “social atomization is prerequisite to perfect competition”.<sup>275</sup> Instead he argues for

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<sup>273</sup> D. North, ‘Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance’, quoted from P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, p. 33

<sup>274</sup> M. Granovetter, ‘Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness’, in: *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 91, No. 3 (Nov., 1985), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 481-510

<sup>275</sup> Idem, p. 484

an “embedded” view of economic activity.<sup>276</sup> Companies generally interact with others of whom they know their reputation and rather than constantly looking at the prices of the spot-market, companies often keep to specific suppliers they have built a relationship with. Many transactions involving high amounts of cash are sealed through handshakes and although it often does happen, firms are hesitant to seek litigation when there are conflicts. Granovetter argues that “the anonymous market of neoclassical models is virtually nonexistent in economic life and that transactions of all kinds are rife with (...) social connections”<sup>277</sup>. Granovetter likens the anonymous market to the Hobbesian state of nature, which was assumed to underlie modern politics. We can thus see the same problem with regard to the concept of modern democracy as resulting from the rational calculation of atomized individuals. When a polity approaches this atomized war of all against all as in the case of Southern Italy (although also here it was war between families rather than isolated individuals), we saw that this inhibited the functioning of modern democracy. Social relations and non-calculative attachments are necessary for modern democracy.

We can thus conclude that not only with regard to the state, but also the market, general contract relations and democracy cannot be understood through the processes of modernization that entail individualism and the pursuit of rational self-interest. Markets not only have a non-utilitarian basis in the institutions that make them possible, but they are also permeated by social relations that give economic behavior a different character. In the cases we have examined, we have seen how traditional culture supports the market and democracy. In this sense, we can in the spirit of Durkheim’s ‘non-contractual elements of the contract’ speak of the ‘non-modern elements of modernity’.

Before we proceed with conceptualizing the general dynamic between modernization and traditional culture, it is important to mention how our investigation thus far ties in with other important debates and themes in social theory. A first is the debate over *agency and structure*. Protagonists of agency argue that human behavior results from the free choices of individuals who have clear preferences and act accordingly through calculation. Structure by contrast focuses on the social contexts that shape the behavior of individuals. Our argument ties in with the latter as we have attempted to show how even what is assumed to be the most individualized and calculative behavior, exchange on the market, is permeated by social structures like institutions and social relations that derive from traditional culture.

A related theme in social theory is the concept of ‘path dependency’. Against the belief that contexts are not important and people have similar courses of action that they can take, the path that has been previously taken shapes the possibilities of the present. In our cases we

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<sup>276</sup> This concept of embedding bears resemblance with the way we use the term in the course of this investigation. When we conceptualize the term in chapter IV, we will come back to this.

<sup>277</sup> Idem, p. 495. And as Evans argues “there is no reason to believe that exchange relations are ontologically prior to other kinds of social relations”. P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*, p. 26

have seen how both previous policy choices as well as deep-seated cultural features shapes the path that countries take in the process of modernization.

Finally, it also ties in with what the Nobel Prize winning economist Herbert Simon has called ‘bounded rationality’.<sup>278</sup> Instead of constantly having an overview of options and preferences, there are limits to the information that humans can process and much behavior is driven not by calculation, but irrationally. Our cases show how modern behavior is shaped by local historical legacies that make certain courses of actions particularly desirable, whereas others are deemed implausible.

## **2). Multiple Modernities**

### *The Best Traditions?*

Now that we have established that pre-modern traditions permeate modernity and shape it into different local patterns, we have to look more closely at the relationship between these traditions and modernity. A first question that we need to ask is whether certain traditional cultures ‘fit’ better with modernity. Put differently, as cultures underpin modernity, do certain of these cultures provide a better underpinning for the development of modernity? Possibly, some cultures provide more obstacles to modernization, whereas others provide strengths that are translated in effective democracies, competitive economic advantage or vibrant civil society. In our cases, we have seen some examples of this. We noted that Korea’s historical legacy of centralized control, high literacy and schooled bureaucracy underpinned the country’s developmental state, whereas the tribal organization, low literacy and lacking bureaucratic tradition of Nigeria undermined this country’s ability to create a developmental state. Furthermore, the culture that emerged in the South of Italy hindered the development of a strong civil society and democratic governance, in contrast with the North of Italy. A leading scholar in the field of how ‘culture matters’ for the process of modernization is Lawrence E. Harrison, who has written and co-authored several books on the subject.<sup>279</sup> From his work, we can adduce some general features of traditional cultures that tend to be conducive to modernization, whereas others provide more impediments. For instance, with regard to world view, a culture that stimulates the idea that people can influence their own

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<sup>278</sup> See for instance: H.A. Simon. *Models of Man: Social and Rational*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1957

<sup>279</sup> Important Works are for instance *Culture Matters*, *The Central Liberal Truth* and *Developing Cultures*.

fate is more conducive than one that breeds fatalism. A clear example of this would be the difference between Protestantism in North-Western Europe on the one hand, and voodoo in Haiti on the other. In value orientation, a focus on ‘the lesser virtues’ like punctuality, tidiness and courtesy also seems to be conducive of modernization. Economically, a culture that emphasizes a strong work ethic and frugality is also an asset, as Max Weber already famously argued.<sup>280</sup> It does then indeed seem to be the case that there are certain features of culture that underpin modernization in better ways than others. However, two amendments to this idea of ‘the best traditions’ need to be made.

In the first place, there are several features of a culture of which it is not clear whether the modernity they produce is better or worse than others. An example of this is the extent of centralized rule in the traditional culture. The argument could be made that a tradition of decentralization is to be preferred because this leads to more possibilities for the flourishing of civil society and private enterprise. An example of a decentralized pattern of modernization would be the United States. On the other hand, we also saw that a tradition of centralization can underpin a developmental state, which at least has produced the most rapid and dynamic process of modernization. Moreover, a strong centralized state may perform better in terms of public works like infrastructure and general education. We also encountered other forms of trade-offs, of which it was unclear which performance was to be preferred. Is it better to have a dynamic sector of small- and medium-enterprises or to have large industrial conglomerates? Moreover, what degree of equality, emanating from local traditions, is to be preferred?

Apart from this objection, a second one is more poignant with regard to understanding the dynamic between traditional culture and modernity, namely that it is hard to know beforehand exactly how a traditional culture will shape modernity. We encountered this when we discussed Max Weber’s analysis of China above. His main interest was in understanding why capitalism developed in the West and not in China, rather than arguing that China could never become capitalist. Still, on the basis of his work, arguments were developed that Chinese culture was inimical to capitalism. We saw that some of the impediments analyzed by Weber indeed functioned that way. Political Confucianism that emphasized a conservative literati class and looked down upon trade was an impediment and capitalism only struck root after it had disappeared. On the other hand, we also saw the argument that the Chinese family inhibits capitalism. Although it might indeed inhibit capitalist enterprise that requires a broad radius of trust, we have argued that the Chinese family actually pervades and shapes Chinese capitalism. Due to the strong emotional attachment to family life, the Chinese private sector consists of a great amount of family firms. Furthermore, diasporic communities have greatly contributed to the country’s development by investing in the extended families in their towns of origin. Our point here is that it is hard to know beforehand if an identified obstacle to

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<sup>280</sup> See L.E. Harrison, *The Central Liberal Truth: How politics can change a culture and save it from itself*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 36-37 for his full catalogue of progress-prone and progress-resistant cultures

modernity is truly that or whether it holds the potential to shape an own form of modernity. Similar examples can be cited from within the West.

Whereas France was a powerful and modern nation in the eighteenth century, Germany still consisted on several smaller states. There was a strong disdain in France regarding Germany's capacity to develop. Especially the French elite looked down on German culture. Voltaire would for instance lecture the Prussian king Frederick the Great on Germany's barbarity. The Prussian king himself also spoke French at the court as he held it to be a finer culture. Nevertheless, in the course of the nineteenth century Germany would catch up with and surpass France as a modern nation. The less fine and more 'manual' character of German culture proved to be a great asset for heavy industry, turning the country into the powerful export economy it is today.

A similar development can be discerned with regard to the European Continent's view on the Anglo-Saxons. Although England was already a powerful nation, Napoleon believed this 'nation of shopkeepers' was inferior to France. And until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, German thinkers believed America's lack of politics and focus on commerce made it a childish culture. Hegel believed America's internal development would first have to become a monarchy to become a developed nation and Spengler saw in Wilson's proposal for the League of Nations a naïve view of international relations.<sup>281</sup> Yet after the World Wars, America's commercialism seems to have become the prime force in its preeminence in world affairs. Its optimism and the spreading of the American way of life are a bedrock of the nation's power.

It is hard to predict what will be the competitive advantage of countries or how a culture responds to the challenges of modernization. Switzerland's parochial culture, due to its isolated location in the Alps and its landlocked geography, put it far from the vestiges of international trade. However, Switzerland responded to this challenge by turning this obstacle into an advantage. The difficulty of reaching the country made it into a safe haven for banking within a politically volatile Europe. And by not being able to export cheaply, the country focused on the production of high value-added goods like clocks, machines and medicine, which made up for high transportation costs.<sup>282</sup>

The way countries respond to the challenges of modernization and the way traditional culture can creatively shape this process can thus not be neatly catalogued or ranked along a singular axis. On the basis of our investigation here however, we will attempt to make some conjectures on prospects and possibilities that current developing countries have in chapter V, explicitly keeping the insight of the formation of new patterns in mind.

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<sup>281</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, pp. 113-114 and O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, pp. 1081 and 1154

<sup>282</sup> See also P. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985, pp. 174-175

*“Everything must change, to stay the same”*

Now that we have looked at how cultural differences between countries creatively shape their process of modernization, we need to look closer at how this process comes about. We seem to have come to a paradoxical situation. In chapter I, we discerned how modernity has a clear directionality and shapes societies universally in a certain direction. In this process, it clearly breaks down much of the traditional world. Now in this chapter, we come to the conclusion that within modernity, much of traditional culture persists and permeates it. How should we understand these two dynamics? Is modernity fundamentally at odds with traditional culture or do they bond together?

The starting point for the analysis has to be the antagonistic relationship between modernity and traditional culture. Apart from the countries in which modernity originated (and even in them), modernity came in as an alien force. Everywhere, it shook ancient patterns and ways of life. A common response then was to isolate oneself from its force. After the contact with European traders and missionaries and their scientific ideas, the Japanese for instance closed off their country for foreign influences for two-and-a-half century under the so-called Tokugawa Shogunate. During this period, only some Dutch traders who were not interested in spreading their ideas and beliefs were allowed to trade on the island of Deshima. Similarly, the Chinese response to mostly English influences was to close the country off and orient themselves inward. Our argument of chapter I indeed showed what great extent of change occurs when modernity unfolds. In this sense, traditional culture differs radically from the world of modernity. Although pre-modern polities are of course not static and have their internal change, societal forces create a kind of balance or interlocking whole that provides a horizon which makes it meaningful to speak of a certain culture.

And it is part of this interlocking whole that constitutes a traditional world, that has to go for modernity to take root somewhere. When we discussed Chinese modernization, we saw that Political Confucian linked to the imperial polity was an obstacle that was eventually removed and made modernization possible. The imperial system of Japan proved to be more flexible and survived the entrance of modernity, although the institution was changed considerably.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Ian Buruma has an interesting theory of this flexibility on account of the more ‘peripheral’ character of Japanese politics. In contrast with China, Japan did not consider itself to be the centre of the world and was used to taking over practices from China. With modernization, Japan simply changed the country it emulated. Moreover, the more decentralized character of Japanese politics, made it possible to change much of the elite, while retaining the imperial institution, which was impossible in China. I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan*, pp. 19-21



However, the constituency of the Japanese elite that favored continuation of the century-old policy of isolationism had to be cast aside. The entrance of modernity thus has an antagonistic relationship to the existing organization of societies and breaks the old power balance. This brings us to another important aspect of the process of modernization that is often overlooked, namely *the relevance of crisis*. Many authors and the whole rhetoric of economic miracles speak of the initiation of a modernization program in terms of leaders suddenly seeing the light. Before this revelation they just did not see how advantageous the market economy could be to them and their societies. It is the way that many authors speak of the economic opening of China, India and the Asian tigers. What these accounts miss is the extent to which an old political constellation had to be broken up, which is why an extreme crisis is often what precipitates modernization as only then a sufficient amount of willingness to change is created. In the case of Japan it was the attack of American ‘black ships’ in the 1850’s that crushed the Japanese navy. It led the country into political turmoil, after which the shogunate was ended and the country started to modernize under the Meiji Restoration. The opening of China from 1979 also has to be seen in the context of crisis.<sup>285</sup> China had gone through considerable hardship in its Communist policies of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural

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<sup>284</sup> From U.S. Library of Congress, 1935

<sup>285</sup> Of course, China at the time had already a modern organization, that of communism. The movement towards capitalist modernization however, illustrates our general point about the importance of crisis.



Revolution. Then suddenly, the charismatic core of this movement that made the hardship possible, Mao Zedong died without an heir apparent. The Communist Party thus faced a tremendous crisis of legitimacy and it was this that motivated the leadership to look for new strategies to create support. In India it was the financial crisis of 1991 that led to modernization and in South Korea the war with the North that provided the political capital for Park Chung Hee's 'nation-building through exports'. Within the West, Germany also illustrates this dynamic. The localism and parochialism of the country made it no match for the army of Napoleon. The battle of Jena of 1806 is the turning point after which Prussia started the military reforms that first modernized this state that would eventually unify Germany.

It is from such a crisis that countries start to import and develop modern technologies, and methods of finance and economic organization. This initiates the process of change that we have described in chapter I. The economy moves towards industry and services, urbanization and literacy spread, the state is rationalized and eventually democracy takes hold.

But as the obstacles to modernization in a traditional polity are removed, other parts of the culture that are more amenable to modernization remain. They remain and are reconstituted on the plain of modernity. It is mostly the *ethos* that resides as the inner element of a culture that persists in modernity.<sup>286</sup> The outward manifestation of a traditional culture is put under severe stress. Put differently, the material basis of a traditional culture is to a great extent undermined. People are driven off the land and agriculture no longer is the main activity of the population. The landed aristocracy loses its grip on the country's wealth and the reason for the existence of ancient warrior classes is undermined. Rituals and crafts that are related to certain classes and village life disappear. Precisely because these outward manifestations and specific classes lose their place in the world of a people, they, to the extent that they are conserved in some form, are marginalized and moved to museums or are only symbolically memorized in festive days.

An ethos on the other hand can reside in a community and be transplanted to the new activities and patterns of modernity. A century-old work ethic that is passed on in the upbringing of children can for instance shift from the plantation of rice to work in the factory. Social relations like patterns of trust or stances towards authority that were developed under different circumstances can have become ingrained in the attitudes and behavior of a people and work through in the organization of a modern economy or political system. And a tradition that emphasizes education and accords great respect to the learned (like Confucianism or Hinduism) can foster development by stimulating the education of the young, even though it are not the Confucian classics or the Vedas, but the textbooks of modern schooling that are now studied. Put differently, it is not in the content, but in the spirit of activity that traditional culture resides in the modern world.

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<sup>286</sup> This does not mean that an ethos cannot disappear in the process of modernization. It does mean that the ethos is the most likely part of a culture to persist in and pervade modernity.

So although our investigation concerns the place of traditional culture in the modern world, it is clear that this account does not assume a static character of traditional culture. In the process of modernization, traditional culture is changed, and as this occurs, so is modernity. To illustrate this point through an example, it has to be noted that China has been Confucian for centuries, but its economic rise only started a few decades ago. A crude explanation in terms of the traditional culture of the country can thus not account for this aspect of timing. China had a Confucian ethic when it was in relative decline in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But as it took on the process of modernization and eliminated certain obstacles to development, the Confucian ethic could be transposed to the plain of modernity, where it could shape and foster an impressive path of economic growth. It is in the second part of this investigation, in chapter IV and VI, that we will elaborately return to this theme in terms of the way it takes shape existentially for people. Here it is interesting to take note of a remark made in Luchino Visconti's movie *Il Gattopardo*. In the movie, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian aristocrat Prince Don Fabrizio Salina sees the revolutionary movement spreading the country and he notes the changes it will bring to the old world. However, this does not lead him to struggle against the movement. Instead, he encourages his son to marry the daughter of a merchant. He seeks to maintain the world of tradition, but knows that fighting modernity will mean the destruction of the tradition he stand in. Instead, to counter the decline of tradition, it has to yield. As he states: "Everything must change, to stay the same".

### *Multiple Modernities*

By emphasizing that local cultural patterns permeate and shape modernity, we come to the term, coined by Samuel Eisenstadt, of 'multiple modernities'.<sup>287</sup> Our investigation has affinity with his project and we will also use his term for the phenomenon we are describing. Like in our investigation, Eisenstadt argues against the view of "classical theories of modernization and of the convergence of industrial societies".<sup>288</sup> He also shows how cultural traditions permeate modernity and in our discussion of democracy in India above, we drew from his work.

There are however, also strong differences between Eisenstadt's theory and our approach here. Both his conceptualization of modernity and of specific cases of traditional cultures differ from the way it is done in our project. In describing the forces of modernity, Eisenstadt for instance focuses strongly on the role of struggle and specifically protest. This focus can be related to the theoretical framework of the research of Eisenstadt. His historical analysis is

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<sup>287</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, 'Multiple Modernities', in: *Daedalus*, Cambridge, 2000, Vol. 129, No. 1, pp. 1-29 and S.N. Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, 2 Vols.

<sup>288</sup> S.N. Eisenstadt, 'Multiple Modernities', p. 1

informed by the idea, developed by Karl Jaspers, of the Axial age.<sup>289</sup> This was a period in history in which profound changes in world view and social structure occurred worldwide, from the rise of Confucianism and Taoism in China, the Upanishads and Buddhism in India, the Greek philosophers and Jewish prophets. Central in the axial age was a conception of the transcendental world and its tense relation with human life and politics. To a great extent, Eisenstadt sees in modernity the attempt to realize different kinds of transcendental and utopian visions. In this sense, he also speaks of modern movements in terms of eschatology and millenarianism. This view of modernity in the context of the Axial age as enacting utopian vision explains Eisenstadt's focus on the role of protest in modernity.

And from this framework, Eisenstadt speaks on two contradictory paths within modernity, one totalizing which denies legitimacy to other views, a path followed by Jacobins and communists, and a path that recognizes plural view points and creates a more liberal and procedural political order. In the course of our investigation we will also encounter these phenomena, but we will position them differently. Partly, we will attribute it to differences in traditional culture (as we will argue in chapter III on the difference between Anglo-Saxon and Continental culture). And in chapters IV and V we will interpret modernity as the realization of what we call 'Technopolis', from which we will also position the phenomenon of totalistic movements.

Apart from the theoretical framework that drives the investigation, Eisenstadt also differently interprets specific examples of traditional culture shaping modernity and is not very clear in describing how this development occurs. In the next chapter, we will delve more into this dynamic by looking closely at a few cases of modernization in the West. These differences notwithstanding, the concept of Multiple Modernities is useful for our investigation here and we can draw from specific case studies in the work of Eisenstadt.

As a final remark in this chapter we want to point out earlier examples of ideas related to our investigation in the history of philosophy. The idea that a political constitution depends on the character of a people is at least as old as Plato's *Politeia*. Whether a state is democratic, aristocratic or monarchical for instance, depends on which virtues and vices dominate the polity. In the modern age, a similar idea was taken up by Montesquieu.<sup>290</sup> In the age of Enlightenment, many philosophers sought to find the universal blueprint for the best political and social organization by deducing it from man's universal nature. The more moderate Montesquieu instead did not believe in the universal applicability of political and moral principles. He was deeply aware of the way local circumstances shaped the character of a people. For him, climate, geography, and the natural environment in general were prime causes for the shaping of local character.<sup>291</sup> However, he also focused on the influence of

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<sup>289</sup> K. Jaspers, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1955, pp. 11-79

<sup>290</sup> Charles de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, New York: Prometheus Books, 2002 (1748)

<sup>291</sup> From this line of reasoning later interesting theories of political geography were developed by Carl Schmitt for instance in *Land und Meer*, which describes the influence of land and sea on polities and Karl Wittfogel's

cultural and religious factors on the working of politics and laws in a country and he emphasized the need to be attentive to local conditions, rather than follow an abstract universal scheme like many of his contemporaries did. Like with the laws, with modernization we should not only focus on the content or 'letter' of the process, but be attentive to the 'spirit' of modernization.

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'hydraulic politics' in *Oriental Despotism*, which explains centralized despotic regimes through the control of river systems.

## Chapter III: Western Paths of Modernization

### *Introduction*

Chapters I through III seek to describe the dynamic between modernization and culture deriving from local traditions on the basis of empirical research largely from the social sciences. In chapters IV and V, this empirical material will be interpreted existentially to discern what this dynamic means in terms of the human condition.

In chapter I we investigated to what extent we can speak of a universal process of modernization. In chapter II we saw that within this process, different patterns emerge as a result of local traditions. There we focused on contemporary cases of modernization in emerging countries like the state in East Asia and Latin America or democracy in India and Italy. This chapter will take a more long-term perspective and we will focus specifically on modernization in the West and see how here too local traditions lead to different patterns of modernization. There are three main reasons why it is of particular interest to focus on the West here.

The first reason is that the West is often viewed as uniform whole. Although we came across some regional differentiation in chapter II, we too spoke of the West as unity in that chapter. When we for instance discussed the developmental state, we contrasted it with development in the West, where the state played an important role, but did not generally act as an investment banker, let alone as an entrepreneur. Instead, the private sector was the main driver of modernization. Moreover, as a result of the economic and political rise of several countries currently, some of which we discussed in the last chapter, it has become quite fashionable to speak of the West versus the Rest.<sup>292</sup> And as a result of this rise of “the rest”, certain intellectuals have also become more attentive to the specific character and contributions of the West. This has been formulated both in terms of the religious legacy of Christianity, but also in terms of the secular project of the Enlightenment. Several authors point to the absence of such a project of Enlightenment in the non-Western world.

A second reason to focus on the impact of local traditions in the West here is that the West is often portrayed as lacking such traditions. Students of the rise of non-Western countries, particularly in Asia, are often enamoured by the mystique of these countries and contrast it with the materialism of the West. As interesting as their studies of countries like Japan or China may be, they highlight traditional patterns of collective spirit, authority and activity, but

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<sup>292</sup> See for instance S.P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: And the Remaking of World Order*, London: The Free Press, 2002 (1997); F. Zakaria, *The Post-American World*, New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008

then briefly compare it with the Western world, which is devoid of such patterns. The contemporary interest in Eastern spirituality often works from the same assumption that the West lacks in spirituality. The East is then seen as a source for an antidote to the individualism and focus on monetary gain of the West. In this chapter we will argue against these assumptions. We will argue that the patterns of modernization within the West also have to be understood against the background of local traditions. Just like in the East, or in other developing countries, Western countries also have a cultural basis that underpins the structures of modernity. Moreover, we will see that identified features of the West like individualism, but even a focus on monetary gain, should not be understood as the lack of any tradition, but instead as elements of certain traditions. The caricature-like comparison with the East often follows from an atmosphere of the End of the West or of America, an atmosphere that has become particularly strong in the wake of the global financial crisis. But only by studying the particular sources and traditions of Western countries can such a claim be evaluated.

Finally, the third reason why it is interesting to focus on the West next is that it can give us an insight into the long-term dynamic between modernization and local traditions. More contemporary dynamics, like our investigation of the traditional sources of India's modern democracy can show how these sources permeate the process of modernization, but leave the question open of whether this will persist in the long-term. It could be that in an early process of modernization certain traditions can play an important role, but as modernization progresses, they become ladders that can be kicked away. Modernity originated in the West and as such the core countries of the West have several centuries of experience with it. If we can show that today still local traditions permeate modernity in the West, this makes the case that traditions underpin modernity considerably stronger. This chapter will thus have a much more historical approach than the previous one.

But the investigation of this chapter will not merely be a geographical extension of the investigation of the last chapter over a longer course of time. In this chapter we will also seek to gain a greater understanding of the dynamic between modernization and culture deriving from local traditions. We will do this by taking a broader approach that will yield for us further concepts with which to characterize this dynamic.

The broader approach entails that we will not just look at one phenomenon in which we can discern a traditional influence in a structure of modernity, like a democratic system or a form of industrial organization, but instead we will look at patterns across several fields. One field that we will again take up is economic organization for which we will argue that there are consistent different patterns between the countries we look at. However, next to this 'material' field, we will also turn to a more 'ideal' field, namely that of modern thought. Not only can differences between countries be discerned within this field, but these differences correspond to those discerned in the economic field. Something similar will be argued with regard to a third field that strikes a middle between these two fields, namely that of education. Education

both concerns the knowledge and skills that drive an economy, thus linking it with the material side, as well as the ideas of how individuals should develop, linking it to the ideal side. Across these different fields we will see corresponding features within certain countries, that set them apart from other countries. This will help us get a deeper understanding of different patterns of modernization.

In the course of this broader approach, we will develop certain concepts that will help us describe the dynamic we are studying. A first concept we will use is that of *critical shaping moments*. This concerns the timing of the process of modernization. At different moments, countries were led to modernize smaller or larger parts of their society and the concerns and interests in those moments lead to a particular shaping of the fusion of elements of tradition with modernity. Although concerns change and patterns of modernization too, these specific moments leave an imprint that is pervasive and can serve as the model for further modernization in a field or in other fields of society. A second concept we will develop is that of *cultural ideal*, or *character*. This is a certain embodiment of the patterns that can be discerned across different fields. A cultural ideal or character can be seen to leave an imprint across societal fields. The concept will be used in the way that Alisdair MacIntyre understands character as both referring to the world of drama as well as to morality. Thirdly, we will introduce the notion of *structural resemblances* or what after Goethe and Weber could also be called *elective affinities*. In certain fields, like that of the economy of a country, we can discern certain structures that bear resemblance to the structures found in other fields of that society, like in education or modern thought. There are thus certain elements that have a propensity to go together across several societal fields. Finally, we will introduce the notion of *style* in our investigation. This ties in with a notion from the previous chapter, namely that of *ethos*. There we saw that a traditional ethos in Japan, *bushido*, or ‘the way of the samurai’ translated in the structures of modernity into ‘the way of the bureaucrat’, or *kanryodo*. In this chapter we will look at patterns across spheres, making it possible for us to broaden a certain ethos to a more general style. Whereas the structural resemblances concern the context in which individuals operate and can thus be seen as their ‘habitat’, style concerns their ingrained patterns of behaviour and so can be seen as their ‘habitus’. In the course of our investigation we will develop these different concepts.

Our investigation will focus on five countries of the West: the United States, England, the Netherlands, Germany and France. Most of these countries today still belong to the greatest economic and political powers of the world. The United States is by far the world’s largest economy and after China and Japan, it is followed by Germany, France and England. The latter three are the dominant political powers of Europe. Together with the United States, the four countries make up about half of the economic activity in the world. Although the Netherlands is a much smaller country, we add it because the country has been important in the development of modernity. In many senses, it was a pioneer of modernization by creating a complex global trade system and developing the world’s first national bank and sophisticated stock market. The four other countries also made great contributions to the development of universal modernization. The modern theory of the market and the industrial revolution originated in England. The political revolutions of the United States and France in

the eighteenth century stand at the cradle of modern politics. Germany has been an example in the rationalization of the state.

Of course other Western countries also made important contributions to the modern world and are worth comparing on this account. Early on, the Italian city-states as well as Spain's global conquests shaped modernity, but also countries like Switzerland and Sweden can be mentioned in this context. It is for the sake of brevity that we limit ourselves here to these countries with which important parts of modernity originated. With a sample of five countries, important comparisons can be made, without drifting too far from the general case we want to make. We will show how, although these five countries contributed to the unfolding of the universal structures of modernity, they modernized in importantly different ways.

In section A we will first approach these national differences through an often-made distinction of Western countries into two types: Continental and Anglo-Saxon. There we will investigate the merits and character of this distinction as a way to get an initial overview of modernization in the West. In section B we will discuss these countries in the field of education. In this section we will also introduce our concepts of critical shaping moments and character. Section C will turn to economic organization. There we will look at how the policies of these countries have diverged as well as how their economies excel at different things and we will explain this through the specific characteristics of the societal forces of state, capital and labour as well as their relations. In this section, we will introduce the concepts of structural resemblance and style. In section D, we will turn with our conceptual scheme to the field of modern thought. Particularly, we will focus on the Enlightenment as this is held to be the quintessential modern school of thought. Moreover, it is often seen as a singular movement that swept across the West, which makes it illuminating to see to what extent it can be disaggregated into national variations. Section E finally will deal with the general implications of the previous. We will try to further understand the dynamic between the patterns we find across different fields and tie in with other themes in social theory. Furthermore, we will pursue some suggestions on how to understand the unity across the different fields made by certain philosophers that, as we will see, have early on been visionary on the issue of this chapter.

### **A). Anglo-Saxons and Continentals: Two Types of Western Societies**

In the previous chapter we already encountered some examples that pointed towards differences within the West in terms of the process of modernization. We saw that in several senses the two 'late industrializers' Japan and Germany were similar. Both have cooperative relations between labour, business and the banking system as well as a relatively strong state.



We also hinted that France has a prestigious schooling system that trains people for public service in a way that is comparable to the system in East Asia. These features of both Germany and France contrast with those of England and the United States.

These briefly mentioned differences are elements of a larger distinction between two types of countries in the West, namely Anglo-Saxon and Continental countries. The difference between these two types of countries lies in the type of relations between the market and society on the one hand and the state and communal responsibilities on the other. In Anglo-Saxon countries, there is a greater reliance on and trust in the market as well as free societal organizations. In Continental countries by contrast, the state assumes a larger role and the market and social organization is much more coordinated. Examples of Anglo-Saxon countries are the United States, England, Ireland, Canada and Australia. Examples of Continental countries are Germany, Sweden, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Austria.

Historically, this distinction has been noted by several authors. Max Weber for instance spoke of the distinction between a *Verkehrswirtschaft* (“market economy”) and a *Planwirtschaft* (“planned economy”). Ralf Dahrendorf distinguished “market rationality” from “plan rationality” and Donald Dore spoke of “market-oriented systems” and “organization-oriented systems”.<sup>293</sup> More recently, Michel Albert had coined the term “Rhineland capitalism” for the Continental model, which he distinguishes from neo-American capitalism.<sup>294</sup> The region through which the river Rhine flows is the historical heartland of the model, but the term has to be used metaphorically now, so we can also place Helsinki and Vienna along the Rhine (and potentially Tokyo, but we will return to this).

A central element of the distinction concerns the conception of the role of the state. A modern state fulfils many functions and in every country the state intervenes in the economy ranging from the protection of private property, the prevention of monopolies to the redistribution of resources and the provision of education. However, in the Anglo-Saxon countries the role of the state in the economy is generally smaller and overall different from its role in the Continental countries. Whereas in the former case, the state’s intervention is *regulatory*, in the latter case, it is *substantial*.<sup>295</sup> Regulatory functions concern the *process* of the market, whereas substantial functions concern the *outcome* of the market. In the former, the state involves itself with the forms and procedures of economic competition, in the latter the state intervenes explicitly in the market to achieve certain social and economic goals. Regulatory functions involve the way businesses compete, but do not concern the question of which industries should exist and which should not. The latter does happen in states that interfere

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<sup>293</sup> Weber, Dahrendorf and Dore as referenced by C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy 1925-1975*, Stanford: California, Stanford University Press, 1982, p. 18

<sup>294</sup> M. Albert, *Capitalism vs. Capitalism: How America’s Obsession with Individual Achievement and Short-term Profit Has Led It to the Brink of Collapse*, New York: Four Wall Eight Windows, 1993

<sup>295</sup> Based on C. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*, p. 19

substantially. One outcome of this distinction is a difference in both systems on the relative importance of lawyers and bureaucrats. Whereas the regulatory process is guarded by lawyers, substantial intervention by the state requires much more from bureaucrats.

Before we proceed, one point has to be made clear to avoid confusion. In chapter II.A we also encountered a type of highly interventionist state in East Asia, the developmental state, which we contrasted with more liberal states. The developmental state however, is not the same as the Continental model we are describing here, but could be seen as a subtype of it. A developmental state also intervenes in the market, but does this to a much greater extent than in our examples of the Continental model. Whereas Continental countries seek to guide the market towards certain outcomes, a developmental state can also seek to extensively shape a market by becoming an entrepreneur itself. Tied to this, the developmental state is a concept that applies to developing countries that through state action embark on industrialization. The Continental model we are describing here, concerns more countries that are already industrialized or even post-industrial.

In Anglo-Saxon countries, a larger part of social life thus falls under the free market, whereas in Continental or Rhineland countries more spheres are shielded from the market. Wages are for instance set in a decentralized way through market negotiations in the former, whereas in the latter there is more centrally coordinated wage setting. Other fields like housing, urban transport, the media, education and health care also tend to be much more left to the market in Anglo-Saxon countries, whereas they are more often public or mixed goods in Continental countries.<sup>296</sup> One outcome of this difference in the extent to which the market reigns free is on income distribution. As a result of intervening in wage setting as well as social welfare, Continental countries overall have a lower level of income inequality than in Anglo-Saxon countries. The Gini index, which measures income inequality, shows a strong contrast between Germany (28,3) and the United States (40,8) as well as the other countries of the two models.<sup>297</sup> The different role of states in the two systems is accompanied by a different ideology concerning the merits of both the state and the market. In an Anglo-Saxon country, or *Verkehrswirtschaft*, there is generally a very positive attitude towards the market. Many people believe it to be the most effective type of regime, citing the efficiency of price incentives and the classical theory of the invisible hand. The state on the other hand is often portrayed as a necessary evil, that should be kept minimal in order to avoid rent-seeking and other inefficiencies. The neo-liberal revolution of the 1990's indeed originated with the England of Thatcher and the Reagan administration of the United States. By contrast, in a Continental country, or *Planwirtschaft*, there is more scepticism towards the market. Here the state, as the champion of the public good, is supposed to hold in check and correct the egotism of the market place. As such, in this type of country, there is a stronger belief in clear societal goals and society is more consensus-oriented. Against this, a *Verkehrswirtschaft* cites the plurality of desires, the lack of consensus and the beneficiary effect of fierce competition.

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<sup>296</sup> M. Albert, *Capitalism vs. Capitalism*, pp. 103-106

<sup>297</sup> Data from UN Human Development Report 2007-2008

This different attitude towards the market in both models can also be seen if we look at a more micro-level to the environment of companies. Both models have different regimes regarding the management of companies. An often-made distinction is that between a shareholder culture and a stakeholder culture.<sup>298</sup> The United States and England are typical examples of the shareholder culture. This means that the ultimate ownership of a publicly-traded company lies with those who own the shares of the company in capital markets. The responsibility of the company is also primarily to these shareholders. Most continental countries in Europe can be described as having more of a stakeholder culture. This means that especially large public companies have a responsibility towards not only their shareholders, but also the people it employs and the country or region it belongs to. The influence of a stakeholder can be formalized when for instance the state owns a large part of the shares or has a so-called 'golden share'. The power of stakeholders versus shareholders can also be guarded by legislation. Until the nineteen-nineties for instance, the Netherlands had a complex set of anti-takeover measures that made it hard for shareholders to force a company in a certain direction. In Switzerland, the largest banks of the country own a large part of the stock of Swiss companies and through restrictive rules on the voting rights of shareholders, foreign and hostile capital is kept at bay. In Germany, different parties like employees and unions are part of the decision-making process with executives and shareholders in the policy of *Mitbestimmung*.<sup>299</sup> This difference is also reflected in the way companies finance their operations. In Continental countries, companies rely mostly on loans from banks for their finance. By contrast, in Anglo-Saxon countries companies rely more on financial markets by issuing debt or stock for their financial needs. Rather than on banks, companies rely more on financial markets in this model. This goes together with the influence of stockbrokers in Anglo-Saxon countries, who work as intermediaries between companies and the holders of capital. It is mostly from the United States and England that the world's great brokerage houses originate. As a result of the greater reliance of financial markets, we can also discern a pattern that these financial markets, expressed as a share of a country's total economic activity, tend to be larger in Anglo-Saxon countries than in Continental countries. Peter Hall and David Soskice show that the total stock market capitalization of Anglo-Saxon countries is larger than the General Domestic Product (GDP) of these countries (more than twice as large in England), whereas it is smaller in the Continental countries.<sup>300</sup> The latter are characterized by more cooperative relations between companies and banks as well as between different companies, whereas the former are more characterized by market and hierarchical relations.

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<sup>298</sup> See for instance McKinsey & Company, Inc. et al., *Valuation: Measuring and Managing the Value of Companies (Third Edition)*, New York, Chichester, Weinheim, Brisbane, Singapore and Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 2000 (1990), pp. 3-14

<sup>299</sup> M. Albert, *Capitalism vs. Capitalism*, pp. 109-110

<sup>300</sup> P.A. Hall and D. Soskice, 'An Introduction to Varieties of Capitalism', in: P.A. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 8-19. Hall and Soskice use different terms for the distinction we are discussing here. What we describe as Anglo-Saxon countries, they characterize as Liberal Market Economies (LMEs) and what we describe as Continental countries, they coin Coordinated Market Economies (CMEs).

They also show how this pattern correlates with the extent of employment protection. Countries with relatively large stock markets tend to have less employment protection than countries that have smaller stock markets. We will take up the effects of this correlation in section C when we discuss the economic structure of the individual countries.

An effect of the greater shielding of companies from capital markets in Continental countries is that they are more free to focus on long-term development and investments rather than on more immediate profits. This is one of the benefits that Michel Albert describes of the Rhineland model. As the person who coined the concept, he is quite clear on where his preferences lie. Not only can companies focus more on the long-term in this model, but overall this model is superior both in its social as well as its economic effects to the neo-American model. The cooperation of large companies is typical of the Rhineland model and the neo-American model is characterized by selfish behaviour, speculation and a greater prevalence of poverty.<sup>301</sup> We want to argue here that Albert's view is one-sided in its appreciation. Just like we saw that students of East Asia often contrast it with a view of the West as materialist and egotistical, Albert repeats the same scheme of thought with regard to the Rhineland model and the neo-American model. Although his distinction yields many important insights, he ignores the strengths of the American model. To name one example, he concedes that Rhineland countries lag in high-tech industries like ICT, but he believes that they will make up for this distance.<sup>302</sup> However, almost two decades after the publication of his 1993 book, this distance only seems to have become larger, with the United States practically dominating the field of ICT. In section C we will seek to explain this difference in performance. What is important to note here is that Albert has too little appreciation of the strengths of the Anglo-Saxon model. To balance his views it is insightful to contrast them with those of an explicit apologetic of the model. Walter Russell Mead for instance argues that the less coordinated character of Anglo-Saxon countries (or English-speaking as he calls them) is why they are able to adjust more easily to a changing world. In France, the coordinated system that has been created is seen as a rationally set order, which makes it harder to let elements of it go. The more pragmatic character of England makes that the country can more easily let things go and move faster when changes occur. This adaptability is also why Anglo-Saxon countries have been less susceptible to systemic crisis and revolution. The Continent by contrast has had a much more tumultuous history. Moreover, the reliance on the market and individualism should not be seen as a purely materialistic pursuit. The great industrialists of American history like John D. Rockefeller and Henry Ford were not just driven by the pursuit of pecuniary gain and they looked down upon comfort. Mead argues that they were visionaries, or 'projectors', who wanted to create a new world. Behind American individualism lies an orientation towards continual self-improvement.<sup>303</sup> The

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<sup>301</sup> M. Albert, *Capitalism vs. Capitalism*, pp. 127-168

<sup>302</sup> Idem, p. 139

<sup>303</sup> W.R. Mead, *God and Gold: Britain, America and the Making of the Modern World*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007, pp. 228-239

‘Yankee’ mentality is characterized by idealism rather than materialism. And whereas in Anglo-Saxon countries the state does less to lower income inequality, they have on the other hand a stronger tradition of private charity. It is not our intention here to argue for the superiority of either of the models. By contrasting the views of Albert with those of Mead, we get a more balanced picture of the two models.<sup>304</sup> Moreover, we will argue that these differences can be traced to long-standing traditions as well as complementary structures throughout society. Because of this, countries are not completely free to choose a model, which is why it makes less sense to speak of a superior model. In the following sections we will analyze the differences character of countries within these two models, which brings to a cautionary note here.

The distinction we have applied in this section is ideal-typical. Countries do not entirely correspond to these ideal types and many countries exhibit a mix of these two models. For instance, England is typical of an Anglo-Saxon country in the extent to which it has an open economy, a large and internationally-oriented banking sector and little state intervention in industry. However, in contrast with the United States, England has an extensive welfare system, which draws it closer to the European Continent.

Furthermore, two countries on the European Continent, the Netherlands and Switzerland, show mixed features. To a greater extent than other Continental countries, these two countries have more open economies, an internationally-oriented banking sector and relatively large stock markets. Furthermore, their states are much less centralized. In the Netherlands, the central state plays a more moderate role and compared to Austria, business is much freer in Switzerland. On the other hand, the Netherlands is characterized by less income inequality and coordinated wage negotiations. And in Switzerland, communitarian interests pervade the market. These two countries can thus be held to hold a middle place between the two models. Depending on which factors are looked at, these two countries are often cited as examples of both types of models.

Whereas we have placed France together with countries like Germany and Sweden, the country also shows considerable differences. Although there is much coordination and intervention in the market, this is done to a much lesser extent in cooperation with labour unions. Labour relations overall are much less coordinated in France. Michel Albert also argues that France holds an ambiguous position and has shown signs of moving in both directions. Hall and Soskice hold that France could possibly be seen as part of a third type of country that can be characterized as ‘Mediterranean’. It clusters with countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece, in that all these countries are marked by a large agricultural sector and histories of extensive state intervention, while having more liberal arrangements in

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<sup>304</sup> From Albert’s point of view, America lacks in social responsiveness, whereas from Mead’s point of view much of the European Continent suffers from Anglophobia.

labour relations.<sup>305</sup> For our account here, we have focused on the extent of state intervention and views on the market, which is why we classify France as a Continental country, but these differences have to be taken note of.

Next to this variation between countries, we also need to mention variation within countries over time. Global trends in certain periods have made the countries of both models move in one direction.

The United States, the prime example of the Anglo-Saxon system developed a much more interventionist state during the thirties of the twentieth century. Roosevelt's New Deal was a response to the Great Depression through which the state expanded its role, stimulated industry and started grand infrastructure projects. Globally, interventionism was growing at this time with the rise of Keynesian economics, but also interventionism by non-democratic regimes in Europe. At this time, Anglo-Saxon countries moved more into the direction of the Continental model. By contrast (and partly as a result of the previous development,) the nineteen-eighties saw a global shift towards a greater orientation on the market and less state intervention. The nineteen-seventies, that were characterized by two oil crises and extended stagflation, led in the nineteen-eighties to a radical shift towards the market. This shift emerged in the Anglo-Saxon world in the form of Reaganism and Thatcherism, the monetarist critique of Keynesianism and other authors advocating "to run the state like a business". Countries throughout Europe, including Germany and France engaged in privatization, liberalization, and the cutting of state budgets.

However, even though there was a general movement in a certain direction in these two periods, the difference between the countries following the two models remained. Anglo-Saxon countries moved less in the statist direction than the Continental countries after the thirties and Continental countries moved less in the liberal direction than the Anglo-Saxon countries after the eighties. Although state intervention increased with the New Deal, state involvement in the United States still remained smaller and never defined the direction of the economy in the way this was happening at the same time in France, Germany and Italy. Whereas statist intervention following the Great Depression in Sweden can be called "social Keynesianism", the United States followed more of a "commercial Keynesianism", keeping the role of the state more moderate.<sup>306</sup>

Similarly, the nineteen-eighties saw a wave of market-oriented reform throughout the Western world. But whereas the United States and England were privatizing many former state businesses, in the nineteen-eighties Mitterand expanded the state's activity in several

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<sup>305</sup> P.A. Hall and D. Soskice, 'An Introduction to Varieties of Capitalism', p. 21

<sup>306</sup> M. Weir and T. Skocpol, 'State Structures and the Possibilities for "Keynesian" Responses to the Great Depression in Sweden, Britain, and the United States', in: *Bringing the State Back In*, P.B. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and T. Skocpol (eds), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 107-163

fields, by for instance nationalizing the computer industry, in France.<sup>307</sup> Countries like France, Germany and Sweden went much less far with neo-liberalism than England or the United States.

We saw above that the difference between the two regimes not only has an economic side, but also has an ideological side. In section D we will return more elaborately to structural differences between countries in this field. By way of the philosopher Allan Bloom we can here shortly hint at the difference between the Anglo-Saxon world and the European Continent in terms of two different modern revolutions. The two revolutions go back to two different conceptions of the state of nature, those of respectively Locke and Rousseau. According to Bloom, the difference between the two revolutions can be summed up by the stance both take on the concept of the 'bourgeois'. Continental reflection, philosophy and art labelled the new man of the democratic political regimes as 'bourgeois', a creature that was egotistical, materialistic without grandeur or beauty of soul. This idea, originating from Rousseau, found its culmination in Nietzsche's depiction of the last man, but persisted long after him in the work of Sartre, Heidegger and the school of Critical Theory. Such a repulsion for the bourgeois never really took root in the United States. According to Bloom "the discovery of the soul's basement" is a Continental specialty that is to be contrasted with the American soul that is more reconciled to this world:

The misunderstanding between America and the Continent is that where Americans saw a solution, Continentals saw a problem. The American Revolution produced a clear and unified historical reality; the French Revolution a series of questions and problems.<sup>308</sup>

Locke's definition of private property, his depiction of man as a rational acquisitive creature, the idea of a minimal state, and society as the coordination of enlightened self-interest proved to be close to the Anglo-Saxon model. By contrast, the Rousseauian critique of the bourgeois, the longing for a wholeness with nature, the invoking of the citizen against the bourgeois, and the assertion of the common good in politics, are themes that come back in the Continental model. We will return to the relationship between a country's modernization and its thinkers, specifically in the movement of the Enlightenment, in depth in section D. What is important to note here is the parallel between a distinction made in the field of economics

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<sup>307</sup> A.D. Chandler Jr, *Inventing the Electronic Century: The Epic Story of the Consumer Electronics and Computer Industries*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 2005 (2001), pp. 77 and 182-183

<sup>308</sup> A. Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo and Singapore: Simon & Schuster, 1988 (1987), p. 160

between the Anglo-Saxon and the Continental regime and a similar distinction concerning two different revolutions and their philosophical concerns.

Having looked at the general distinction in the West between two models, it is now time to look more closely at the particular paths that the five countries that we selected took in the process of modernization. First we will turn to the field of education.

## **B). Education in the West**

The field of education is an important part of social reality as it concerns the aspirations of human development, thus society's ideals, as well as its more material economic capacity. Initially, it might not seem clear how we can discern the influence of local traditions in the world of modern education. Our global age is characterized by a great exchange between countries of students and teachers and by universally standardized tests.

When we discerned the universal patterns of modernization in our first chapter, we saw in chapter I.B that general modern education<sup>309</sup> is one of these patterns. In the field of Modernization Theory, a radical distinction is made between traditional education and modern education and it is argued that the latter is uniform across the world (or is at least becoming more uniform). McClelland for instance argues that modern education teaches individuals to seek to change the World and their fate, whereas traditional education teaches more passive acceptance of the world.<sup>310</sup> Daniel Lerner also sees in modern education (together with modern communications) the central driver for the universalization of modernity.<sup>311</sup>

Through a brief overview, we can see how modern general education spread in a universal manner. Globally, and particularly in the West, our region under study here, countries have embarked on a process of universal literacy. The first steps towards a system of mass education were taken in the Nordic countries. In Sweden for instance, the national church together with the King urged parents and communities to foster popular literacy, bringing the literacy rate from 20 per cent in the seventeenth century to 80 per cent in the early nineteenth century.

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<sup>309</sup> With general modern education we refer to the spread of mass literacy as well as a curriculum based on the modern sciences.

<sup>310</sup> D.C. McClelland, *The Achieving Society*, Princeton, New Jersey: Van Nostrand, 1961

<sup>311</sup> D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, New York: The Free Press, 1966 (1958), pp. 54-65



Apart from universal reading and writing skills, the study of the modern sciences of mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology have also been incorporated in the curriculum. For this development, the ideas of the period of the Enlightenment have played a crucial role in several countries. Whereas in previous times, the Church was the primary vehicle of education, the actors of the Enlightenment sought to replace this kind of education with a universal national education system. In 1793, Robespierre presented a plan for compulsory education in boarding schools to replace church education. In the United States, Thomas Paine proposed a project for national education and in England, Adam Smith proposed a state-supported, state-administered and state-enforced system of education, although it would take a long time for this to take effect in England.<sup>312</sup>

Next to Enlightenment ideas, another major universal force in the development of modern education has been the process of state-building and the rise of nationalism. Education was meant to create citizens with good character and patriotic sentiments. Not just character was at stake, as the competition between nations also made economic expertise and military capacity central concerns in the construction of modern education. For instance, the French educational reforms of the 1830s were justified as a means to match the German army. To adopt the Education Act of 1870 in England, its proponents cited the need for the English to have the same level of education as other European nations if it wanted to compete and be safe.<sup>313</sup> Developments that were universal throughout the West have thus shaped modern education.

However, as we saw in the previous chapter, this does not preclude the persistence of local traditions. We saw there that within the plain of modernity, considerable differences exist that require an understanding of such traditions. We saw in the previous section where we looked at two models in the West that in the field of economics, Anglo-Saxon societies are much less state-oriented and more decentralized than the Continental societies. We see the same pattern if we look at education.

Throughout modern history, the education systems of Germany and France have been much more centralized than those of England and the United States. Within the centralized systems, Germany was much more attentive to local needs and concerns than France, but in both countries there has been a greater standardization in terms of curriculum, financing and practices than has been the case in the Anglo-Saxon countries. In England, there was an old system of non-state elite universities that had close ties to the Church as well as to the aristocracy. State involvement in education has been persistently smaller in the country and despite calls for greater public responsibility, the whole system of education was ‘voluntary’ well into the nineteenth century.<sup>314</sup> Even after that time, the state never developed a grand scheme of educational reform to the extent as it has been common in France ever since the

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<sup>312</sup> G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments*, New York: Vintage Books, 2004, pp. 63-65 and 101-102

<sup>313</sup> W.K. Cummings, *The InstitutionS of Education*, Oxford: Symposium Books, 2003, p. 64

<sup>314</sup> Idem, p. 92

French Revolution. Similarly, in the United States education was a local affair and was linked to the Church. However in contrast with England it was not connected to an aristocracy but with the local community. Ever since the founding of Harvard in 1636 by the General Court of Massachusettes, the institutions of education have been intimately connected with local communities: “Americans came to believe that no community was complete without its own college”.<sup>315</sup> At the time of the revolutionary war, a century later, there were over eighty of such institutions, which is remarkable as England at that time still only had two degree-granting institutions, Oxford and Cambridge.

The pattern of the level of centralization between countries in the economic field is thus also reflected in the organization of education. As we shall see when we look at the individual countries, within the universal forces of modernization, there are considerable differences. This for instance relates to the relative importance of the different forces in a specific country. It also relates to the specific character of these forces. State-building and nationalism for instance, took on different forms in the countries under study. The specific timing of educational reform in a country implies that certain traditions are confronted with specific local concerns, through which the modernization of education is shaped. These are what we call *critical shaping moments*. The confrontation of traditions with timely concerns shapes modern institutions. As Frederick Jackson Turner argues: “Behind institutions, behind constitutional forms and modifications, lie the vital forces that call these organs into life and shape them to meet changing conditions”.<sup>316</sup> Although the institutions created at such moments can and will in time again be changed, they leave an imprint, the traces of which can be discerned in subsequent development. This way, different patterns of modernization are created. In the following descriptions of the development of modern education in the five countries, we will focus specifically on such moments. In applying the concept of critical shaping moments to the field of education, we will particularly rely on the work of William K. Cummings in his book *The Institutions of Education*. He supplements our critical moments with the idea that the concerns in such moments lead to a special emphasis on a certain type of school. For instance, when a concern for the integral character of students is at stake, a stronger emphasis will be put on physical and aesthetic education next to cognitive development. When the creation of a mass labour pool for industry or the staffing of the army are central concerns, the emphasis in education will be on primary education. By contrast, when it is specific technical expertise that is required, the emphasis will be more on secondary

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<sup>315</sup> D.J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The colonial experience*, New York: Random House, 1958, p. 78

<sup>316</sup> F.J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921 (1920), p. 2. This 1920 book that is not read much anymore provides valuable insight into the particular character of American modernization and we will refer to it in our discussion of the country. His approach of looking at the cultural forces behind institutions comes close to our approach here. Turner for instance argues that it is not enough to look at external forms like regime type to understand how a country works. Concerning America, he states that it cannot be understood by looking at its political organization and its “glorious Constitution”. Already in the early twentieth century, he mentions a fallacy that sheds light on the country’s foreign policy almost a century later. It is mistaken that “we have believed as a nation that other peoples had only to will our democratic institutions in order to repeat our own career”. Idem, p. 244

and tertiary education. The specific type of school or part of the schooling system from much reform originates leaves an imprint on subsequent reform for other schools as it functions as a model of reform. At the end of this section on education we will also introduce our concept of cultural ideal or character with reference to Cummings' approach. First however, we need to turn to the different forces that shaped modern education in the five countries we are interested in. In our overview, we will focus on the particular 'exemplary schools' in the different countries.

### *Germany*

Turning to German history, religious motivation also played a key role in the rise of modern mass education in the country, although as we shall see, its impact was different in other countries. The Reformation's critique of merely outward piety and its focus on inner understanding enhanced the literacy rate as believers were required to read Scripture themselves. Especially urban populations were attracted to the Protestant reforms. Cities came to see themselves as oases of republican government in a desert of autocratic rule. From this confidence, chroniclers of cities let their histories begin with Adam and Eve. However, the impact of Protestantism was different from its impact in the United States or the Netherlands, where it would put the countries more strongly on a path towards individual freedom. The Protestant cities of Germany were on the one hand characterized by a drive towards more freedom, but on the other hand they were characterized by a strong *Verordnungsfreudigkeit*, or a need to put everyone unambiguously in his place, down to the clothes that could be worn and the words that one might properly speak. These were reflections of "a society more fearful of anarchy than of tyranny".<sup>317</sup> Whereas Protestantism in America went together with a fierce individualism and quest for freedom, in Germany this was more ambiguous, as Martin Luther wrote: "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant, subject to all".<sup>318</sup> The German Reformation was fused with state power in the areas in which it was adopted, through Luther's weaving together of temporal and spiritual power. Lutheranism became a more cooperative state church and religion was woven throughout civic life. This connection can for instance be seen in Luther's appeal to rulers in 1524 to fund public schools for all boys and girls with the goal to create "men able to rule over land and people, and women able to manage households and train children and servants".<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> S. Ozment, *A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People*, London: Granta Books, 2005 (2004), pp. 66-68

<sup>318</sup> Martin Luther, 1521, as quoted in *idem*, p. 81

<sup>319</sup> Martin Luther, 1524, as quoted in *idem*, p. 89

A next critical shaping moment in Germany's modern education was the process of state-building emanating from Prussia. Under Frederick II, or 'Frederick the Great', the concern for mass literacy and education in general was taken up by the state and translated into regulations. The *General-Landschulregiment* (general County School Regulation) of 1763 was a first instance of state involvement. In the Prussian General Code, *Allgemeine Landrecht* of 1794 education became compulsory for all. By the end of the century, Prussian laws declared the state to be the guardian of the child's rights vis-à-vis their parents and it stated that parents had a duty in making sure their children were educated. The process of state-building in Prussia aligned with the element of service that we distinguished with regard to the German Reformation. Frederick the Great for instance wrote on his own role:

A prince is the first servant... of the state [whose duty it is] to reward service and merit, establish some... balance between rich and poor, relieve the unfortunate in every walk of life, [and] breed magnificence in every limb of the body of the state.<sup>320</sup>

The state developed a system in which it regulated the finance of schools as well as the recruitment and training of teachers. Over time, state considerations concerning the development of a workforce for the developing industries, the civil service and the army became central in the growth of modern education. Berlin University, established in 1810, assumed the role of selecting and educating those who would take up service in the Prussian civil service. In the course of the wars of the German states with their neighbours and the unification of Germany, education also received a more nationalistic dimension. The defeat by Napoleon led to a strong cry for German unification by people such as the philosopher Fichte. Kaiser Wilhelm II spoke at the Conference on Secondary School Reform in 1890:

The foundation of our gymnasium must be German. It is our duty to educate young Germans, not young Greeks or Romans... We must make German the basis, and German composition must be the center around which everything else revolves... There is another point which I should like to see more developed with us; that is the 'National' in questions of history, geography, and heroic tradition'.<sup>321</sup>

Thus in Germany, the main concerns that led to the development of modern education systems were first the religious convictions of Protestantism, then the process of state-building and the staffing of the state and finally nationalism. The original impetus for education came from a religious concern and was hence provided by local churches. As the central issue was literacy for the masses to be able to read the Bible, the core institution that

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<sup>320</sup> Frederick the Great, 1746, as quoted in idem, p. 139

<sup>321</sup> As quoted in: W.K. Cummings, *The InstitutionS of Education*, p. 79

was developed was a system of *primary education*. In the curriculum, there was an emphasis on literacy and Bible reading, with arithmetic in the upper grades. After the defeat by Napoleon and when school attendance was made obligatory, next to the local churches, the state also started to pay for these schools. This was accompanied by a greater emphasis in the curriculum on civics and ‘loyalty to the Grand Duke’.

## France

The connection between education and the state throughout the history of Germany has been strong, but this was even more so the case in France. Under the *ancien regime*, France was already strongly centralized and as such it had several universities in and around Paris and a highly developed intellectual life at the French court.

The centralization of France was for instance furthered with the policies of Francis I, who in 1539 ordered priests to keep exact registers of baptisms and later also marriages. Important about this edict was also that it required the use of the language *langue d’oïl*. This was at the detriment of the *langue d’oc* and made an important step in the creation of modern standard French. This can be contrasted with Italy, which only in the nineteenth century imposed a uniform language on the multitude of mutually incomprehensible dialects. Another great reform of France in the sixteenth century was the vast compilation of customary law.<sup>322</sup>

Centralization reached its summit in the rule of Louis XIV, the ‘Sun King’. Next to his personal absolutist rule, he also had powerful officials under him like Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Under him, a great amount of legal codes were produced and local authorities were put firmly under central control. For instance, the mayors of almost all the important cities were appointed by the king. Colbert sought absolute obedience and wanted to increase the grandeur of the state through grand projects. The state interfered in agriculture as well as industry and Colbert stimulated the country’s shipping industry in an attempt to emulate his arch enemy of Holland.<sup>323</sup> The tradition of centralized control continued throughout the ancient regime. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the Administration of Bridges and Roads with its passion for straight lines, created the vast network of roads that was widely admired even by the English. Its leaders founded the first *grande école* of bridge-building in 1747.<sup>324</sup>

Until the French Revolution, popular education had been the sole prerogative of the Catholic Church, that mostly favoured education for the upper and middle classes. Throughout the *ancien regime* primary education was relatively weak in France. The first great move towards

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<sup>322</sup> P. Goubert, *The Course of French History*, New York: Routledge, 1991 (1984), pp. 82-86

<sup>323</sup> Idem, pp. 124-130

<sup>324</sup> Idem, p. 163

modern mass education came with the French Revolution and was hence strongly infused with republican concerns. The power of the church was challenged in order to create what Robespierre called ‘a new people’. Georges Danton said concerning education:

It is time to re-establish the grand principle, which seems too much misunderstood, that children belong to the Republic, more than they do to their parents...We must say to parents: We are not snatching them away from you, your children, but you may not withhold them from the influence of the nation. And what can the interests of an individual matter to us besides national interests? It is in national schools that children must suck republican milk. The Republic is one and indivisible; public instruction must also be related to this centre of unity.<sup>325</sup>

And in defence of a new system of more compact departments, Adrien-Cyprien Duquesnoy argued:

A new division of the territory should above all produce that inestimable advantage of melting the local and self-centered spirit into a public and national spirit, it should turn all the inhabitants of the commonwealth into Frenchmen; all those who, until today, were merely Provençaux, Normands, Parisians or Lorrains.<sup>326</sup>

From the French Revolution two formative myths of modern France arose, namely that the French state is the creator and tutor of the nation and that the Grands Corps of the state are the repositories of a science of national development and flourishing.

A second major impetus to the development of modern education in France came from Napoleon who shifted the focus from the training of good republicans to the creation of a labour force of engineers to lead the army and build an empire. This led to a great emphasis on secondary schools. During the *ancien regime*, it was the aristocratic spirit that led to a negligence of education for the masses and the creation of a very tough curriculum so as to leave only a small elite for secondary education. The secondary institutions were initially called *collèges*, but after the Revolution they were called *lycées*. In them, the elitist system of education persisted, but now through its emphasis on the creation of the technical elite. The schooling system was organized as a hierarchical pyramid, entirely at the service of the emperor. The *lycées* became extremely disciplined, where the same subject was taught everywhere at the same time and the students were directed by celibate servants. The grandes écoles of the Polytechnique and the Normale were completely organized to create the required

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<sup>325</sup> From a speech delivered to the National Convention in 1794.

<sup>326</sup> As quoted in: M. Loriaux, ‘The French Developmental State as Myth and Moral Ambition’, in: M. Woo-Cumings (ed.), *The Developmental State*, Ithaca, New York, and London: Cornell University Press, 1999, p. 256

technical elite for the state.<sup>327</sup> The former, also called “X” for the crossed cannons that are its emblem, was specifically founded to supply Napoleon’s Grande Armée with engineers. This system of elite schools for the staffing of the state resembles what we saw in the previous chapter when we looked at the modernization of East Asian societies. These system of elite schools still plays an important role in contemporary France and has subsequently been elaborated upon. After World War II for example, the École Nationale d’Administration (ENA) was founded to provide the nontechnical ministries with personnel.<sup>328</sup> In the next section we will see how this system is intertwined with France’s political economy.

Concerning the development of the curriculum, before the Revolution the emphasis was mostly on Latin classics and slightly on Greek, as Latin was important for the study of theology, law and medicine. After the Revolution, religion was less central and mathematics and science were incorporated. In the 1830s Francois Guizot was the major architect of a national system of basic education. He used the outline made by Napoleon of the national system organized under a central university, regional academies, departments, and local communes. Thus in the late nineteenth century, the Minister of Education could pride himself with, just by looking at his watch, being able to tell which page of Virgil all schoolboys of the country were annotating at that exact moment.<sup>329</sup>

In sum, in France the centralized tradition, republicanism and modern thought as well as the need to create a technical elite, were the main drivers behind the creation of modern educational institutions. The corresponding exemplary institution is the *lycée*.

## England

We already saw above that in England education was strongly decentralized. What were the traditions and concerns that shaped modern education in England? A first thing to be noted about the English educational system is the strength and long history of its elite educational system, with Eton and Harrow at the secondary level and Oxford and Cambridge at the tertiary level. With Oxford dating as far back as the eleventh century, this system has been strongly shaped by the English aristocracy. Children of high-class families would be prepared for their future status in society. Eton College for instance has been called ‘the chief nurse of England’s statesmen’. In contrast with France, England’s chief higher educational institutions were before the advent of modern science already shaped in a manner that persists today. Deriving from the concerns of aristocratic education, character formation was central in

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<sup>327</sup> P. Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 223

<sup>328</sup> M. Loriaux, ‘The French Developmental State’, pp. 237-238

<sup>329</sup> Hippolyte Taine, quoted in: M. Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2010 (1964), p. 239

England's educational institutions, and in terms of the curriculum the classical tradition was emphasized. The Greek and Latin classics were the main focus and remained so even when in the nineteenth century European art, history as well as mathematics and the natural sciences were added to the curriculum. The concern with character formation and good personality can also be seen from the strong emphasis on co-curricular activities in English schools, including drama, debate, music and athletic activity from archery to rowing.

Admission to the schools was restrictive. Typically, recommendations from important local figures were needed by aspirants. Apart from academic promise and good character, proper breeding was also an explicit consideration.

Apart from the aristocracy, the Church of England also played an important role in shaping these higher educational institutions, both in its imprint on Oxford and Cambridge as well as in its support for the preparatory public schools. Whereas in France, education was secularized by the French Revolution, in England religion (seen in for instance the large chapels at colleges and schools) and religious studies remain part of the curriculum in many schools. Whereas modern education was antagonistic to religion in France, both coexisted easier in England. This has to do with the more moderate and less dogmatic character of the Church of England. The first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, for instance wrote in 1538 "there was never anything by men so well devised or so surely established which in age and continuance of time hath not been corrupted"<sup>330</sup>. With slight changes, the sentence became the opening of the preface to the 1549 Book of Prayer and remains present today in prayer books in the Anglican Communion. This remark shows a flexibility in doctrine and practice that made the Anglican Church relatively speaking more open to change than other churches. All churches have erred "not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith" is written in the Articles of Religion.<sup>331</sup> Religion in England thus had a considerable degree of scepticism of reaching the ultimate truth to it.<sup>332</sup> However, this scepticism did not result in a radical critique of tradition or a detachment from the community. In section C we will see how this is also a particular characteristic of English modern philosophy. When we looked at different political cultures in the previous chapter, we saw that like the United States, England had a strong civic culture, but whereas in the former this went together with a high degree of participation, the subject role was more prevalent in England. Its civic culture can be characterized as deferential.<sup>333</sup> This ties in with the often noted phlegmatic character of England, where crisis and doubt are taken light-heartedly. We will see, when we turn to the United States next, that the openness

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<sup>330</sup> As quoted in: W.R. Mead, *God and Gold*, p. 203

<sup>331</sup> Ibidem

<sup>332</sup> Interestingly, this compares to the scepticism we found in Hinduism in section II.C, where we argued that this scepticism contributed to the country's capacity to tolerate heterodoxy and maintain democratic politics.

<sup>333</sup> G.A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Newbury Park, London and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989 (1963), p. 315



to change persisted with the English settlers in the New World, but that this phlegmatic character disappears. In contrast with both France and the United States, English authority remains much more traditional and much less republican.

A next force shaping education in England grew in the course of the nineteenth century. Compared to other European countries, England embarked relatively late on a program of popular education. The main concern here was staffing civil servants for the East India Company as well as for industrial competition with other nations. In defence of the popular education, Foster stated for Parliament in 1870:

We must not delay. Upon the speedy provision of elementary education depends our industrial prosperity. It is of no use trying to give technical teaching to our artisans without elementary education; uneducated labourers – and many of our labourers are uneducated - are for the most part, unskilled labourers, and if we leave our workforce any longer unskilled, notwithstanding their strong sinews and determined energy, they will become over-matched in the competition of the world. If we are to hold our position among men of our own race or among the nations of the world we must make up the smallness of our numbers by increasing the intellectual force of the individual.<sup>334</sup>

However, creating a stronger industrial basis and staffing the civil service assumed a different character than in either Germany or France. Whereas in Germany loyal servants were created and in France a technical elite was forged, the staff of civil servants in for instance the East India Company had a different character. The heroes of the empire were educated in the prestigious schools of England, but their popular appeal owed less to what they learned in class and more to what they learned on the playing field. Hunting was for instance widely practiced throughout the English Empire by the elite, but also soccer was a popular export from the British Isles. Most popular however, was the subtle sport of cricket, which today still knits together the countries of the British Commonwealth. Strengthening the English state did not have the stern character of German state-building or the technical character of French state-building, but was modelled more as a competitive game. According to Niall Ferguson, “the British Empire of the 1890s resembled nothing more than an enormous sports complex”<sup>335</sup>. Typical of this playing-field imperialism was Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, who had an army career in India, Afghanistan (part of what has been called “the Great Game”) and Africa, after which he codified the ethos in the precepts for the Boy Scout movement that he founded. Another example of the centrality of competitive games in English culture was Thomas Arnold, who founded Rugby School that mixed Christian piety with athleticism into something called muscular Christianity.<sup>336</sup> The importance of

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<sup>334</sup> As quoted in: W.K. Cummings, *The InstitutionS of Education*, p. 20

<sup>335</sup> N. Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World*, London: Penguin Books, 2004 (2003), p. 260

<sup>336</sup> W.R. Mead, *God and Gold*, p. 255

competitive games in England ties in with both the mentioned aristocratic education as well as the phlegmatic stance in the face of serious affairs.

Although England eventually embarked on universal education, its educational system has remained polarized up to the current day. Vividly depicted by Dickens, working class conditions were bad in the nineteenth century and the state was reluctant to interfere. The later educational laws set in motion what Johnson has called a two-tier educational system, one for the elite and a second for the masses.<sup>337</sup> The first tier consists of the prestigious public schools (which although they are called public are actually funded and governed by private parties), whereas the second tier consists of the other local educational institutions that have been put under the guidance of the local education authority (LEA) at the turn of the twentieth century.

Hence a central pillar of the current English educational system, its elitist tertiary institutions, has its origin in pre-modern times and was strongly shaped by the concerns of the aristocracy and the Church. In the late nineteenth century, concerns of industrial competition and the education of civil servants in competitive games led to a further development in England's educational institutions. The strength of the original aristocratic imprint on education persists in the current-day two-tier system and the exemplary institution of English education is the *public school*.



*Eton College, the traditional nursery of England*

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<sup>337</sup> D. Johnson, *Private Schools and State Schools: Two Systems or One?*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987

## *The United States*

Turning to the United States, an often noted feature of its system is the amount of freedom it incorporates for individuals to make their own choices and follow their own paths of study. Part of this has to do with what we discussed earlier when we looked at the decentralized character of the American system. The strength as well as the diversity of local communities in the United States prevented the rise of a uniform and standardized educational system. It was in the United States that the 'elective principle', the principle that students need not follow a completely determined curriculum, but had the opportunity to choose from a wide range of courses, was first developed. What were the main legacies and concerns in the establishment of educational institutions in the United States?

We saw already that the initial colleges of the country were rooted in local communities and were even deemed a central element of any community. Indeed, Harvard College was established only sixteen years after the first settlers arrived in New England. Just like in Germany, the emphasis on education had to do with the Protestant religion of the original settlers. The very religious character of these settlers can be seen from the strongly held belief that in America that they were establishing God's kingdom on earth. They framed their settlement as "a Covenant with God" in order to create what John Winthrop would consider in his famous sermon "a city upon a hill" a model for the world. Huntington summarizes several aspects of this issue:

They were a "chosen people" on an "errand in the wilderness," creating "the new Israel" or the "new Jerusalem" in what was clearly "the promised land." America was the site of a "new Heaven and a new earth, the home of justice" God's country. The settlement of America was vested, as Sacvan Bercovitch put it "with all the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual appeal of a religious quest".<sup>338</sup>

The Protestant background of the settlers emphasized direct communication with God and required the ability to read the Bible. Just as in Germany, this was a force in the development of education in America. However, we saw that in Germany this went together with a spirit of service to the community and the state and left many traditional hierarchies in place. In the United States by contrast, religion went together with a strong focus on personal development. The settlers, but especially the pioneers of the American West believed in individual competition, free from social and government constraint. The battle with the wilderness created a spirit of nonconformity and personal development. This linked with a belief in democracy and a hatred for aristocracy, monopoly and special privilege.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> S.P. Huntington, *Who are we? America's Great Debate*, London: The Free Press, 2005 (2004), p. 64

<sup>339</sup> F.W. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, pp. 271-273

The second impetus for the development of modern educational institutions was comparable to what we saw in France and concerned the civic virtues. This had to do with the necessity of creating a new polity in new country after the independence struggle with England and the Declaration of Independence. As a democratic polity, a requirement for the polity to function well was education of the masses. Horace Mann, an important contributor to the Common School Movement that spread education among the masses stated:

Now as a republican government represents all interests, whether social or military, the necessity of a degree of intelligence adequate to the due administration of them all, is so self-evident, that a bare statement is the best argument... In a republican government, legislators are a mirror reflecting the moral countenance of their constituencies. And hence it is, that the establishment of a republican government, without self-appointed and efficient means for the universal education of the people, is the most rash and foolhardy experiment ever tried by man.<sup>340</sup>

Charles W. Eliot, the president of Harvard who decided to introduce the elective principle in education argued in its defence that in a democratic society young people were mature enough to make their own choices.

This emphasis on the civic virtues is similar to the situation of France, but whereas there this came into direct conflict with the local religion, in the United States religion persisted as a strong force in education just as we saw in the case of England. Whereas in England however the influence of the aristocracy was strong, in the United States, religion was joined with the spirit of republicanism and democracy. To be more precise, in the United States the spirit of religion and the spirit of republicanism and democracy did not stand at odds with each other, but were intimately connected and they infused each other. Edmund Burke noted this when he contrasted the fear, awe, duty and reverence that Englishmen felt towards political and religious authorities with the “fierce spirit of liberty” among Americans. He stated:

[Americans] are Protestants and of that kind which is the most averse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. All Protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of dissent. But the religion most prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on that principle of resistance: it is the dissidence of dissent, and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion.<sup>341</sup>

The difference between the English and the Americans was also noted by Frederick Turner. He mentions the original phlegmatic character of the colonists which in time was transformed

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<sup>340</sup> As quoted in: W.K. Cummings, *The InstitutionS of Education*, pp. 79-80

<sup>341</sup> E. Burke, ‘Speech on Moving Resolutions for Conciliation with the Colonies’ in: R.J.S. Hoffman, P. Levack (eds.), *Burke’s Politics*, New York: Knopf, 1949, p. 69-71

into a “strained nervous energy” characteristic of America.<sup>342</sup> The more fearful and reverential character of English religion that Burke mentions corresponds to the deferential culture we described above to be contrasted with the more participant culture of the United States. In the United States we can also observe the formation of different forms of religion than those of the original settlers. In time, the magisterial Reformation (Lutherans, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists) declined at the expense of more populist movements like Wesleyan Methodists and Anabaptists. The American movements were characterized by flatter organizations, more congregational control over worship, less emphasis on doctrinal nuance and academic matters and a more emotional style of worship and preaching. Today still these are features that set American religion apart. Probably the most famous observer of American society, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote that whereas in France religion and liberty opposed each other, the Americans have succeeded in combining the spirit of religion with the spirit of liberty.<sup>343</sup>

We already noted the prevalence of colleges that were founded very early on by American communities. The interest in the colleges can be contrasted with the relative weakness of college preparation. During the colonial period, preparation was mostly done through self-study and tutorials. A public school system slowly evolved over the nineteenth century, but the exemplary educational institution in the United States has been the *liberal arts college*. Originally, the curriculum was modelled on the English system with an emphasis on the classical studies of Latin and Greek. But whereas in England the schools were backed financially by a wealthy church, in the United States, backing had to come more from lay boards in the local community. This local responsiveness is reflected in changes in the curriculum. Early in the nineteenth century unorthodox optional courses were being provided in fields like commerce, legal studies and technology. The more practical bent of American education led to the early rise of agricultural and engineering colleges and the training of lawyers, administrators and journalists in the service to democracy. The more classical educational ideals of the New England region were spread over the country, but these were in the process changed.<sup>344</sup> According to Turner, they underwent a ‘forest change’, and not in the form of the ‘dream of a German forest’, but in the form of an American forest to be conquered with the axe, which made these ideals more attuned towards action.<sup>345</sup> Turner characterizes the American intellect as follows: “that coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of the mind, quick to find expedients; that

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<sup>342</sup> Turner, F.J., *The Frontier in American History*, p. 37. For an interesting argument that today still the region of New England differs in this way from other regions in the United States see J. Garreau, *The Nine Nations of North America*, New York: Avon Books, 1981, pp. 14-48

<sup>343</sup> A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York: Vintage, 1954 (1835), p. 316

<sup>344</sup> F.W. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, pp. 283-284

<sup>345</sup> Idem, pp. 215-216

masterful grip of material things, lacking in artistic but powerful to effect great things; that restless, nervous energy”<sup>346</sup>.

The concern in the United States for making education relevant for the students has roots in these local forces, but also in the stress on religious freedom to interpret the Bible oneself and can be also seen also in the introduction of the abovementioned elective principle in the colleges. Another field where the emphasis on individual development can be seen is the importance of extra-curricular activity at the colleges in fields like debate, drama and athletics, similar to England but then from a different background.

In sum, religious concerns, the creation of civic virtues and the focus on local and practical needs shaped the American educational institutions of which the *liberal arts college* is the exemplary school.

### *The Netherlands*

In contrast with Germany and especially France, and like England and the United States, the small country of the Netherlands has been characterized by a strong tradition of decentralization. Throughout much of its modern history the power of local communities, towns and provinces has been extensive. Jonathan Israel notes that in the country’s early modern history, in contrast with what would later become Belgium, regions were also not dominated by individual cities. This resulted in much more horizontal relations within regions.<sup>347</sup> This localism was complemented with cooperative structures, especially concerning land reclamation and protection against flooding. From these structures a style emerged that has later been called the ‘poldermodel’. This model is characterized by a lack of hierarchical central control combined with a strong sense of reaching consensus through horizontal means. The historian Johan Huizinga argued that the “hydrographic structure” of the country led to democratic politics as the relation with the water required self-government.<sup>348</sup> This model is also often used to describe both the contemporary relations between political parties in the country as well as the relations between the state, business and labour, but we will return to this in the next section.

This tradition of decentralized rule was also one of the prime arguments in defence of the revolt against Spain. Authors argued that the country did not break ancient agreements, but

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<sup>346</sup> Idem, p. 37

<sup>347</sup> J. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall: 1477-1806*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998 (1995), pp. 23-26

<sup>348</sup> Johan Huizinga, as quoted in: H. te Velde, ‘Het poldermodel. Een introductie’, in: D. Bos, M. Ebben and H. te Velde, *Harmonie in Holland: Het poldermodel van 1500 tot nu*, Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2007, p. 22

that instead Habsburg rule was attempting a centralized bureaucratic and autocratic rule that ran against the country's traditions. In an important text that defends the Dutch revolt, the author states:

(..) these Netherlands (...) have never been governed as an absolute monarchy or kingdom, where the Lord of the country would have been allowed to manage the affairs of the country at his will and pleasure, without minding its laws and rights. On the contrary, the country has always been managed and administered, with the right and justice, through a republican or rational civic policy, in such a way that the lord of the country has been like a servant and professor of the country's rights, laws and regulations, indeed like a father of the fatherland, whose task it is to serve all, be they poor or rich, noble or common, with equal laws, justice and judgment.<sup>349</sup>

This tradition of decentralization worked through in the development of the Dutch educational institutions. Important in the development of modern Dutch education and tied to the tradition of localism was the impact of the Reformation. In contrast with Germany and England however, this assumed a much more insubordinate character. Whereas Lutheranism fused with local authorities and rejected outright resistance to them, and Anglicanism was deferential, the Dutch Reformation led to a strong culture of resistance. Comparable to the United States, encroachments by the state were heavily guarded against. Denominations have tried to become the state church, but these attempts failed, leading to a situation in which different religious denominations were tolerated. Religious localism resulted in a great amount of schisms within Dutch churches. This strong focus on one's own religious beliefs made education the reserve of private institutions rather than of the state. Furthermore, religious instruction was overall a strong concern in Dutch education.

Another force impacting the shape of modern Dutch education derives from its citizen culture. Neither the state (as in France) nor an aristocracy (as in England) assumed pre-eminence in Dutch society. Instead, its culture was centred around citizens, or 'burghers'. Schama has shown how this led to an emphasis on practical matters.<sup>350</sup> Again like in the United States, education had a more practical bent in the Netherlands.

The state however did assume a greater rule following from the period of Napoleonic rule, creating a unified state, equality of all under the law and a well-trained administrative apparatus, none of which existed in the earlier Republic. The Van den Ende Act of 1806 stated that the goal of education was to instill Christian and social virtues in all children, while teaching them applied and useful skills to develop their intellectual capacities.<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> M. van Gelderen (ed.), *The Dutch Revolt*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 85

<sup>350</sup> S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, New York: Vintage Books, 1997 (1987), pp. 69-93

<sup>351</sup> M.T. Hooker, *Freedom of Education: The Dutch Political Battle for State Funding of all Schools both Public and Private (1801-1920)*, Bloomington, Indiana: Llyfrawr, p. 3

The ‘stubborn localism’ however persisted, leaving room for specific religious instruction under school time.<sup>352</sup> Yet resistance to state influence remained. Groen Van Prinsterer for instance argued that the state should not monopolize education as education and moral upbringing could not be separated from each other.<sup>353</sup> A large part of the current Dutch constitution derives from the 1848 constitution drafted by the liberal Thorbecke. Controversy remained over the issue of the freedom to create private schools and their financing and the struggle was dubbed the ‘Schoolstrijd’ (battle over the schools). For instance, as a result of the secularization of Theology departments by the Higher Education Act of 1876, Abraham Kuyper founded the Vrije Universiteit (Free University) on the basis of religious principles, where free stands for freedom from government interference. De schoolstrijd ended with the constitutional change of Article 23 in 1917 on the freedom of education. It created the peculiarly Dutch system in which the state funds not just public but also private schools. The decentralized nature of Dutch society thus again was reaffirmed, but in contrast with the United States, the plurality of orientations is not left to the private sphere, but like in other Continental countries, they are funded by the state to achieve equal opportunity. The focus on moral and religious upbringing in education and the intense struggle over the right to educate children according to one’s own views, make the local *primary school* the exemplary school in the Dutch system.

### *The Characters Behind the Institutional Stage*

In the previous we have discussed the different forces at work in the modernization of education in five countries. The timing of the development of the first modern educational institutions, or the *critical shaping moments*, appeared to be relevant, as in these moments timely concerns are confronted with local traditions, which together shape the path of modernization. These different concerns are manifested in the specific curriculums that were developed in these countries. Moreover, these different concerns lead to an emphasis on specific parts of the educational system ranging from primary schools to technical schools, public schools and liberal arts colleges. We saw that such initial institutions form a kind of exemplary institution that remains a focal point of reference for further developments in education.

We started this section with the remark that education is specifically relevant for understanding a society as it is explicitly concerned with the question of what type of persons individuals should become. Cummings suggests that there are specific *ideals* in a society and that these ideals shape the development of educational institutions. Cummings makes an interesting suggestion with this idea, but he does not specify the character of these ideals. In

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<sup>352</sup> This is the origin of the free Wednesday afternoon that still exists in Dutch primary education.

<sup>353</sup> Idem, p. 12



the following we will use some of his suggestions for discerning the ideals of certain societies, but first we need to gain a firmer grip of what it means to characterize the ideals of a society. The concept of ideals itself can be understood in an abstract manner. Societies can for instance have ideals of equality, freedom or order. What we are interested in here is more in embodied forms of ideals. This embodiment will prove to be particularly important when we reinterpret our central dynamic existentially in the second part of this investigation. Instead of ideals we will here speak of *cultural types* or *characters*. The specific merit of speaking of and identifying characters is that they shed light on the diverse phenomena that we encountered in the field of education and, as we shall see, in other fields too. These diverse phenomena can be made sense of by relating them to cultural ideals or characters.

We can explain these concepts by way of Alisdair MacIntyre's concept of character in his book *After Virtue*. There he uses the concept to discern the characters that embody modernity like the therapist and the manager. The concept refers in the first place to the world of drama. Many dramatic traditions possess a group of stock characters that are immediately recognizable to the audience. The nature of these characters also provides restraints on the possibilities for the plot. Hence, a character directly speaks to the imagination of the audience as it is 'typical'. Next to this association with the world of drama, the concept of *character* is also strongly connected with morality. According to MacIntyre, characters are 'the moral representatives of their culture and they are so because of the way in which moral and metaphysical ideas and theories assume through them an embodied existence in the social world'.<sup>354</sup> A character of a culture furnishes the members of that culture with a 'cultural and moral ideal'. So when we speak of a 'cultural type' this refers to a social representation of a culture that has immediately recognizable features and functions as a cultural and moral ideal for the members of that culture.

With this understanding of the concept we can now turn to the characters that shaped the institutions of education in the five discussed countries. The English educated gentleman, the German loyal public servant, the French technical elite, expansive individual in the United States and the stern Dutch burgher are the characters that stand behind the institutions of education in these five countries. They are what we called 'characters' as they are immediately recognizable as typical of a culture and represent an ideal in their respective cultures.

The exemplary English educational institutions serve the formation of the *educated gentleman*. We noted above the aristocratic and hence the elitist character of English education. In contrast with the modern specialist, a gentleman should have a broad scope of knowledge and a well-balanced character. This accounts for the more persistent emphasis in England on the study of the classics as well as the greater emphasis on extra-curricular

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<sup>354</sup> A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory (Second Edition)*, London: Duckworth, 1985 (1981), p. 28

activity in sports, music, debate and drama. Also, the continuing presence of the church is related to the ideal type of the educated gentleman as it conveys the aristocratic concern for conservative moral upbringing. The institution most crucial in the development of the gentleman is the public school.

German education was shaped by the ideal of the *loyal public servant*. The concern to staff the bureaucracy and army with qualified people was a strong force in the creation of Germany's exemplary institutions. The strongly nationalist tone in the development of educational institutions has as its counterpart the loyalty of the public servant. The egalitarian spirit coming from Protestant education and the emphasis on service in the German Reformation make the German primary school the place for the development of the loyal public servant.

The ideal that informed educational institutions in French society was the *technical elite*. This in the first place emanated from the centralized tradition that characterized France in the ancient regime as well as after the French Revolution. It unites this centralization with the Enlightenment concept of the man with encyclopaedic knowledge and the Napoleonic vision of a strong and technologically advanced France. The education of the technical elite has as its institutional counterpart the French lycée.

It is the character of the *expansive individual* that was the focal point of American education. The Protestant religion of the original settlers emphasized the individual appropriation of the Bible as well as individual freedom. The strength of diverse local communities hindered the development of a centralized and homogenous system. Education in America was geared towards practical matters to increase the individual's mastery of his environment. It was for the freely developing individual that the elective principle was introduced at America's representative educational institution, the liberal art college.

The character of the *stern burgher* informs modern Dutch education. A strong sense of individualism emanated from the tradition of localism as well as from the religious sphere. The poldermodel at the same implied a moderating responsibility to the community. Moral and religious instruction were important in the educational system, but at the same time had to accommodate different views. Educating the burgher implied a focus on practical matters and skills rather than on theoretical matters.<sup>355</sup>

In our discussion of the development of educational institutions we came across several distinctive features in the four countries we analyzed. Table 1 summarizes the administrative style, the origin of educational institutions, the exemplary school and the ideal of the four countries.

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<sup>355</sup> In this description of the characters that belong to the development of modern education in the five countries we have taken over elements from Cummings' typology of ideals. In two cases our typology deviates from his. For the United States we speak of the 'expansive individual' rather than the 'continuously developing individual'. We believe that this captures better the aspect of practical application in American society. Secondly, the Netherlands are not discussed in Cummings' study.

**Table 1: Education in the five Countries**

	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Exemplary School</b>	<b>Ideal</b>
<b>Germany</b>	Quasi-centralized	Reformation, State-making	Primary School	Loyal public servant
<b>France</b>	Centralized	Revolution, Technological competition	Lycée	Technical elite
<b>England</b>	Decentralized	Aristocracy Anglican Church	Public school	Educated gentleman
<b>United States</b>	Decentralized	Protestantism, Local community, Civic culture	Liberal arts college	Developing individual
<b>Netherlands</b>	Decentralized	Localism, Protestantism	Primary School	Stern burgher

In our description of cultural types or characters we have to be careful not to stereotype societies. We by no means want to argue that all people of a society are driven to follow these characters, nor that they function in a manner of mechanical copying. These societies can also be shaped by different characters than the ones we described, or they can even run counter to them. Opposite to the French technical elite for instance stands the anarcho-syndicalist who fights the centralized regime by a retreat in small communities or a labour strike. A retreat from the state can also be found to have a tradition in Germany, of which the Biedermeier movement is an example. Moreover, we have defined the characters in a way that they can be discerned in quite different forms in different times or stations of society. The German loyal civil servant can for instance also be found in the cooperative and responsive style of German business. The American expansive individual is found in the pioneer with his axe as well as in the Silicon Valley entrepreneur. In this sense, our concept of the character should not be understood as a Platonic idea, but more as a Wittgensteinian family resemblance. It is a web of meaning that consists of different elements that are held together by diverse features and references. It is not a metaphysical entity, but a tendency that becomes manifest in different forms.

The concept of characters we use here should not be interpreted in a very restrictive manner. In chapter V we will argue how this concept can shed light on the existential dimension of the dynamic between modernization and local traditions.

Here we need to be careful not to generalize too broadly. But against the common belief that all people start from a blank slate and that location does not matter, we want to argue that people are to a great extent shaped by the local traditions they are born in. The merit of our approach should come from the manner in which we describe the different fields in the sections of this chapters and show how specific patterns can be discerned in societies.

### **C). Political Economy: State, Capital & Labour**

From the field of education we will now turn to the field of political economy. Just as with education, we will see here that even though the political economy of the five countries is thoroughly modernized, there are considerable differences between them. Moreover, we will show that the differences between countries in this field correspond to the differences we discerned in the field of education. Within countries we can thus see similarities across spheres. Conceptually, we want to take the observation of chapter II, that local traditions shape modernization, further.

We saw the persistence of certain institutions and a concomitant ethos in chapter II. In the last section we looked at cultural types or characters as a kind of guiding principles in a society that bring together different practices and institutions. There showed this with regard to the field of education. The hypothesis of the following sections is that the cultural features that we've encountered in the previous section on education have parallels or what we call *structural resemblances* or *elective affinities* in other fields. The concept of structural resemblances is an elaboration of the concept of institutions that we discussed in the previous chapter. Institutions are the contexts in which people operate and which inform their behaviour and thought. Structural resemblances concern the similarity of institutional settings or structures across the spheres of a society. For instance, in French education we saw a highly centralized institutional setting linked with the creation of a technical elite. When we turn to political economy in this section, we will be able to discern a similar setting there and in the next section we will see a similar preference in the field of modern thought or philosophy. Structural resemblances can also be described as elective affinities, following Goethe, who used the term to describe the propensity of certain elements to go together. In the social sciences, Max Weber also used this concept. He for instance argued that the features of the Protestant religion and the economic system of capitalism show strong resemblances, can reinforce each other and thus have a tendency to go together. We will use the term here to describe how the differences between societies in one field have a tendency to correspond to similar differences in other fields. Although this analysis is very un-Nietzschean in substance, we could however still say that its outcome is in agreement with the early Nietzsche's

definition of culture as the unity of a people in all its expressions of life<sup>356</sup>. Just like structural resemblances are an elaboration of the concept of institutions, or the context in which people live, we will later on in this section speak of *style* as an elaboration of the concept of ethos, which denotes the habits or attunement of people to their surroundings.

In the field of political economy, we can see how apart from the universal modernization of the field, considerable differences between countries persist. In this section we will take our lead from two patterns of differentiation between the five countries we study. First of all, we will look at patterns in policy outcomes that pertain to political economy. In three fields, macroeconomic policy, industrial policy and incomes policy, we will first argue that these countries have followed different paths. After we have noted these policy differences, we will go on to explain these differences. For this we will turn to the structure of and relations between the large societal forces of state, business, financial sector and labour in the five countries. We will see that the different structure of these forces and the way they relate to each other explain the divergence in policy outcomes.

The second pattern of divergence in political economy we will turn to is the strength of countries in particular sectors. We will see that the countries we analyze differ in the sectors in which they excel and in which they are weaker. To explain this, we will also look at the fundamental structures in these countries of the large societal forces. Specifically, we will turn to a part of political economy that comes close to the field of education we discussed in the previous section, namely skill formation. We will see that the different traditions of these countries in terms of skill formation lead to different economic profiles, which explains the differences in strength of sectors in particular countries.

First however, we can already hint at a link between the field of education and that of political economy. When we broadly distinguished Western countries in two types of models in section A, we discussed the differences in the political economy of these two models. Before we go on to discuss the countries individually, we can already link this distinction in the two types of Anglo-Saxon and Continental countries to the different patterns we saw in the field of education. The five characters that we identified in education differ strongly from each other, but in comparison we can say that two of these characters refer to private individuals in society and two have a more public orientation, whereas one falls somewhere in between these two. Both the American expansive individual and the English educated gentleman find their fulfilment in private life. The features of the Anglo-Saxon model, trust in the free market, distrust in the state, an emphasis on the plurality of interests, thus correspond to two characters in the field of education. Although different from each other, the educated gentleman and the expansive individual both ‘fit’ with the Anglo-Saxon political economy.

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<sup>356</sup> Nietzsche, F., ‘Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen: Zweites Stück: Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben’, in: *Die Geburt der Tragödie, Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, p. 274

By contrast, the French technical elite and the German loyal civil servant have their position in and orientation on the public sphere. Features of the Continental political economy, a greater distrust of the market, an emphasis on consensus, a more positive view on the state, thus correspond to the distinguished characters in French and German education. But whereas the German loyal civil servant refers more to collective responsibility, the French technocrat is at home in a more hierarchical environment. We will see that this difference between the two Continental countries in the field of education returns in the difference of their political economies. The Dutch stern burgher falls in between the two orientations. The burgher is a private figure and hence is closer to the Anglo-Saxon model, but is much less characterized by a distrust of state and its public good than the aristocratic or the pioneer spirit. This also corresponds to how we saw before that the Dutch political economy falls in between the Anglo-Saxon and the Continental type.

We can now move to an analysis of the particular features of the political economy of the five countries. As mentioned, we will do this in two parts, first looking at patterns in policy and then at the competitive advantage of the countries in different sectors. In the field of policy, we see different patterns in the five countries over the post-war period.<sup>357</sup> After looking at this divergence in policy, we will see that it can be explained through the structure and relations of the central societal forces of state, business, financial sector and labour. The approach of this section is thus different from our analysis of the field of education. There we wanted to trace the origins of modern education in the five countries. As such, we had to take a long historical approach. Here we will look at contemporary patterns in policy and explain them by looking at the structures behind them, without going into the origins of these structures. The historical scope of this section will thus be much shorter.

### **1). Political Economy I: Policy in the Five Countries**

We distinguish three types of policy that pertain to political economy and that we will discuss in the following: (1) macroeconomic policy, (2) industrial policy and (3) incomes policy. We can discern different paths followed in these three fields by the countries under study. Concerning *(1) macroeconomic policy*, the countries diverge in the extent to which the government and the central bank have acted contractionary by keeping spending low and having tight budgets or more stimulating (Keynesian) by acting countercyclical through increased spending and deficits to stimulate the economy. At the one end of this scale stands France, where the government almost continuously throughout the post-war period has ran budget deficits to stimulate investments by increasing demand. With subsidized rates, the government increased business loans. At the other end stands Germany, where the federal

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<sup>357</sup> Of course, the creation of the European Union over this period enforced a degree of uniformity on countries. Having a singular currency, Germany, France and the Netherlands have given up independent monetary policy, though not fiscal policy. Nevertheless, the important differences remain. For instance, the reaction of the countries to the global financial crisis has been very different and characteristic of the national approaches of the individual countries that we identify here.

government tended to run a budget surplus. Similarly, the Bundesbank, before it went up in the European Central Bank, acted extremely contractionary with strict monetary policy (keeping interest rates high) when it deemed government spending too high, even when the economy was weakening. A similar line of policy was pursued in the Netherlands. In between them stand England and the United States, where policy has tended to swing back and forth between reflation (stimulating policy) and deflation (contractionary policy). Brief periods of expansionary policy were followed by periods of restrictive fiscal and monetary policy. In terms of the currency, we also see a diverging pattern. In England, policy was pursued to keep the pound sterling high. By contrast, throughout most of the post-war period (and ending of course with the establishment of the euro) the German mark was an undervalued currency. France stands in the middle here as it did not pursue an undervalued currency (like Germany), but did devalue the franc when it faced problems (which England resisted).

Turning to (2) *industrial policy*, this was by far most vigorously pursued by France. After the Second World War, the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance channelled funds to six sectors it sought to develop. The state pursued a strategy of creating ‘national champions’ to compete with multinationals from other countries. A central concern has been the transfer of resources to high-technology industries of which Airbus, the Plan Calcul (France’s attempt to build a computer industry), the Concorde and its nuclear program are examples. In Germany, industrial policy has been much more limited. There have been programs to rationalize different industries, like the steel sector in 1962-63 and 1971-74, but these were orchestrated mostly by the large German banks rather than the state. In the Netherlands, there are strong planning agencies, but their orientation has been more general and less sector-specific. Moreover, their formal power is limited. In England as well the United States, there has been much less of an official industrial policy. To the extent there was a rationalization of sectors, this was much less encompassing and effective than in France or Germany.

Finally, we see major differences in (3) *incomes policy* between the countries. Cooperation between labour unions with business and the state has been strongest in Germany as well as the Netherlands, whose system has been called ‘tacit tripartism’. Especially notable in both cases have been the restraint on the side of the unions. The strong cooperation between different parties in Germany has since 1967 been called *Konzertierte Aktion* (action in concert). In England, the unions have been a strong force in formulating incomes policy, but in a more confrontational style than the cooperative style characteristic of Germany. Deals between employees and employers often broke down and periods of policy alternated with periods of no central coordination. Although France has a reputation for high profile strikes, these have only rarely been able to disrupt economic activity. The unions have a confrontational style just like their English counterpart, but have lacked the strength to influence policy much and they have been excluded from most of the negotiations concerning industrial policy. In a different context, the labour unions similarly have had limited impact in the United States, making for weak incomes policy.

Table 2 summarizes the differences between the five countries in the three policy fields we discussed above. Looking at these different patterns of policy we can already discern some of the features we distinguished in the previous section concerning education. In the first place we find that the style of administration in education (column 1 of table 1) is similar to the extent of industrial policy that we find here.

Industrial policy was carried out centrally by the state in France, in a more decentralized way in Germany, but was practically absent in the Netherlands, England, and the United States where market forces were less intervened with. Furthermore, the centralized planning of France is interesting in the light of the cultural ideal of the technical elite in French education. And the German cooperative tripartist style and action ‘in concert’ shows affinity with the educational ideal of the loyal public servant. How do we need to understand such resemblances in different fields and what are the mechanisms through which these different spheres connect with each other?

In the following, the policy patterns just described will be explained by looking at the organization of the societal forces of state, capital and labour in the five countries. We will see that the pattern of organization of these groups, their relative power and the relations amongst them explain the divergence in policy that we described above. Moreover, in the discussion of the countries we will look at the link with the patterns we saw in the field of education.

***Table 2: Policy in the Core Countries***

	<b>Macroeconomic Policy</b>	<b>Industrial Policy</b>	<b>Incomes Policy</b>
<b>Germany</b>	Contractionary, Weak currency	Led by banks	Tacit tripartism
<b>France</b>	Stimulating, Currency not uniform	Planned: National champions	Labour weak
<b>England</b>	Shifting, Strong currency	Absent	Partial concessions to labour
<b>United States</b>	Shifting	Absent	Labour weak
<b>Netherlands</b>	Contractionary	Weak	Tacit tripartism



An important feature of the French banking institutions is its strong expertise as well as its influence on the affairs of French industrial firms. Something similar is the case in Germany, but there it works through a different channel. Industrial firms can raise capital in two ways, through the stock market and by taking loans with banks. In France, typical of the Continental model as we saw, firms are very dependent on long-term debt with banks. The Parisian stock exchange has historically been underutilized. The size of its market capitalization compared to France's General Domestic Product (GDP) has been considerably lower than the figure for England or the United States, which is typical of the Anglo-Saxon model. The heavy reliance of firms on banks has given the banks greater influence over the affairs of those firms. This strong intertwinement between finance and industry has led French banks to take an active interest in the long-term production and marketing strategies of the country's industry.

In turn however, the French banking system is strongly influenced by the state. State involvement has a long history in France,<sup>358</sup> but a major factor for the current system was the creation of state-controlled institutions after the Second World War for the collection of savings and the provision of funds to industry and agriculture, housing and tourism. Through these institutes, the French state can exert much influence on the banking system. Looking at the French state, a first important characteristic is the considerable influence the Ministry of Finance has had on the Bank of France, which contrasts strongly with both England and Germany. Another feature is that the Ministry of Finance is apart from fiscal and monetary policy also involved with industrial policy. This also contrasts with the other countries.

French labour is not strongly organized. Membership of unions in France is very low. Moreover, labour is divided over a multitude of unions that strongly compete with each other. In the country's long history of anarcho-syndicalism, the unions have been confrontational and capable in organizing mass demonstrations or general strikes, but less capable of consistent cooperation.<sup>359</sup> The power of unions in France is not negligible as can be seen in the protection of workers in the country. In contrast with other countries however, this is not the result of negotiations with employers, but of the pressure unions put on the state to implement mandatory reforms.<sup>360</sup>

We thus find a structural resemblance between the political economy of France and its educational institutions in the highly centralized form of organization. The legacy of centralization that dates back to the *ancien regime* and that shaped education can still be

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<sup>358</sup> We discussed this in the section on education. See also: M.C. Meininger, 'The Development and the Current Features of the French Civil Service System', in: H.A.G.M. Bekke and F.M. van der Meer (eds), *Civil Service Systems in Western Europe*, Cheltenham, United Kingdom and Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar, 2000, pp. 188-197

<sup>359</sup> P.A. Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 244

<sup>360</sup> M. Crozier, *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, pp. 246-247

discerned in the country's contemporary political economy. In France we see an industrial sector that is strongly influenced by the banking sector, which in turn is strongly influenced by the state. The issues we found when we looked at education bear resemblance to what we find when we look at state, finance and labour. The centralized power in France's political economy is made possible by a strong and prestigious bureaucracy. The so-called *Grands Corps* consist of the experts and civil servants, organized in different division, that make up the higher administration of the country. The special position of the high bureaucracy is also seen from the practice in France of bureaucrats moving to high positions in the private sector. In other countries of the West the opposite move, successful businesspeople taking up a political career later in life, is more common. We did see another example of this French practice in Japan, where it was called 'the descent from heaven' (*amakudari*). In France, this practice is called *pantouflage* (meaning "slippers"), a term originally used for those who avoided public service. Like in Japan, the name shows the prestige of public service.<sup>361</sup> Through this practice, former bureaucrats have taken on top positions in the leading firms of France, ranging from the automobile manufacturers to energy firms and banks. Moreover, we come here to a direct relationship between the field of education and that of political economy. The prestige of the bureaucracy is made possible and reinforced by the educational institutions in which its members are created. The *Grands Corps* are staffed by the brightest students of the schools for civil service. These are the *grandes écoles*, which are specialized and work independent of the university system. Like the classical Chinese bureaucracy, entrance to these schools happens through a highly selective entrance examination. As such, France has been called a society of "castes", but then based on diplomas.<sup>362</sup>

The character or cultural type that we identified in French education of the technical elite was forged in the critical shaping moment of the French Revolution and Napoleon's reforms. From then on, the belief spread that science should be used to organize French society and that this was the task of the French state. It made the bureaucratic engineer the incarnation of the state. This legacy has persisted up to the present day in the schools for the training of bureaucrats and diplomats. Most prominent among them have been the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA) and the Commissariat General du Plan (that was replaced by the Center d'analyse strategique in 2006). Both institutes were established by general Charles de Gaulle in 1945-6. Another relevant and famous French higher educational institution is Sciences Po (where 'Po' stands for 'politique'), established in 1872 to produce civil servants and diplomats. Especially ENA, which is a principal source of recruitment in the civil service, imbues a sense of distinctiveness and the feeling of responsibility for the French economy in its students. They are trained to be the grand strategists of French industry.

These educational institutions are linked to the political economy of France and have this way underpinned the extensive state involvement in the economy up to contemporary time. In the twentieth century, there have been four waves of increased state involvement in the economy.

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<sup>361</sup> M. Loriaux, 'The French Developmental State', p. 239

<sup>362</sup> By M. Bauer and B. Bertin-Mouro, as quoted in idem, p. 240

Defense and services like the railroads were nationalized in the 1930's. As we saw, in the aftermath of the Second World War, another wave of nationalization followed in finance, but also in energy. In the 1960's, public firms were established in high-tech sectors like the aerospace industry, nuclear materials and information processing (the *Plan Calcul*). De Gaulle at that time also created several laboratories and research centers. Finally, when much of the world embraced neo-liberalism in the 1980's, Mitterand added defense companies, steel companies, and commercial banks to the public sector. We can thus characterize the French political economy as 'bureaucratically-planned capitalism'.

### *State, Capital and Labour in England*

We noted that France stands out in the influence that the Ministry of Finance has had on the Bank of France. England by contrast has been characterized by a strict separation between the Treasury, responsible for fiscal policy, and the Bank of England that is responsible for monetary policy. Expertise on monetary issues is highly concentrated in the Bank of England and many prime ministers have attested to the considerable autonomy it has vis-à-vis government policy. In contrast with both France and Germany, the Treasury has hardly any responsibility for England's industrial policy and instead it is focused on the control of public expenditure.

Capital in England is strongly characterized by its international orientation. Early in the nineteenth century England developed a powerful financial sector with global interests. The City of London, especially after its re-emergence in recent decades, continues to play a central role in global financial markets. In contrast with France, English finance did not develop a strong relationship with domestic industry. In England, the interest of finance and industry diverged more than in France and (as we shall see) in Germany. UK firms rely less on bank loans than their counterparts in the other countries, generate more capital through the stock exchange, and the loans that they take from the banks are more short-term loans. As a consequence, English banks have less of an incentive to be deeply involved with the long-term strategy of these firms and to develop the expertise that is necessary for this.

English labour is more organized than its French counterpart and most organized workers are affiliated to the central congress (TUC), although the congress is a loose federation. English labour has managed to secure wage gains for its members and has political leverage through its links with the Labour Party.<sup>363</sup>

The organization of state, capital and labour in England clearly shows the decentralized structure we also encountered in the field of education. The English state interferes less with

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<sup>363</sup> P.A. Hall, *Governing the Economy*, p. 250

the economy and this is formalized in the strict separation between the Treasury and the Bank of England as well as the limited mandate of the former.

Another important feature is the confrontational nature of organization in these fields that we can associate with the cultural type of the educated gentleman. The state, the financial sector and industry have not engaged in long-term strategic cooperation in England. The financial sector has been much more distant from industry than in the Continental countries focusing more on the analysis of the creditworthiness of a balance sheet than on a long-term partnership. The Labour movement has sought to achieve its goals through fervent opposition to business, and government and has been suspicious of in-depth cooperation with either.

We have described the ideal of the gentleman in England as a figure who finds his fulfilment in private life. The virtues of regulated competition are implanted in English youths in the multitude of contests in sports and debate in the school system, most prominently of course in its elite universities. The aristocratic origins in education emphasize personal freedom, struggle and conquest, virtues that vindicate and underpin the confrontational style of organization in state, capital and labour.<sup>364</sup>

The influence of the ideal of the educated gentleman can be traced throughout the evolution of English business. In contrast with Germany and the United States for instance, the role of the founder and the founder's family has been more extensive in England. To a lesser extent than in the other countries, externally-recruited managers were taken on board in the large English enterprises and the founders or their families continued to exert power over the company. Moreover, in English enterprises, senior executives have often worked closely in the same office-building near the largest plant. This made close personal contact possible and these firms did not implement the detailed organizational charts that were characteristic of the largest American and German firms already before 1914. Senior positions were granted as much on the basis of personal ties as on managerial competence. When outside directors were selected, family connections and social position remained important considerations. Whereas we spoke of France as bureaucratically-planned capitalism, we can speak in England, in line with Alfred Chandler's investigation, of 'personal capitalism'.

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<sup>364</sup> In the course of the twentieth century, England lost its preeminent place in global finance. The later reemergence of the City of London as a financial hub can be interpreted in terms of a game comparable to what Wimbledon is for tennis: the country may no longer boast the world's top, but it can benefit from hosting it on its ground.

Just as in England, Germany has been characterized by a strict division of fiscal and monetary policy between the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Finance and the Deutsche Bundesbank. Especially the latter had a history of autonomous action, which was guaranteed by the German constitution. Appointments to the Bundesbank were long-term and not influenced by the government or the two mentioned ministries. However, the state has been more active in the economy than in England. Yet, in contrast with France, this has been much more decentralized. The individual *Länder* of Germany as well as the cities have considerable autonomy in formulating economic policy. For instance, if we compare the cluster of companies that have emerged in Munich in Bavaria with the cluster in the United States in Silicon Valley or in England in Cambridge, the Bavarian government played a much more active role in creating the environment for business than its counterparts in other countries.<sup>365</sup>

Just as in France, German finance has been deeply involved in the affairs of domestic industry. Financial capital is Germany relatively concentrated and has been dominated by the large banks like Deutsche Bank, Dresdner Bank and Commerzbank, of which the latter two merged in 2009. However, the relationship between finance and industry is different from the situation in France. There we saw that banks had a stake in industry due to the loans that industry takes with the banks. In Germany, this is less the case, but banks in Germany have historically been less prohibited to take large stakes in the stock of industry than banks have been in other countries. German banks have traditionally owned large portions of the shares of their national industry. This has given the banks large voting powers at shareholder meetings and very often seats on advisory boards. Through this mechanism a long-term strategic alliance has been established between German finance and industry. Comparable to Japan, German companies have their 'house banks' to which they turn for finance and consultation.<sup>366</sup>

German labour is characterized by a high level of concentration of which the DGB, the *Deutschegewerbeschafsbund*, is an umbrella organization in which most unions are united. Labor unions have large staffs and great financial resources, which is one of their strengths in bargaining with business. Furthermore, they have extensive research centres and affiliations with academia. Germany's industrial relations are characterized by the regularized nature of collective bargaining arrangements, with agreements typically lasting three or four years, after which new rounds are held. This system of regularized bargaining has led to a high degree of cooperation with business in which the unions on the one hand have shown much restraint, but on the other hand have secured long-term benefits. As a result of this cooperation,

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<sup>365</sup> J. Saperstein and D. Rouach, *Creating Regional Wealth in the Innovation Economy: Models, Perspectives, and Best Practices*, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, New York, London, San Francisco, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong, Cape Town, Madrid, Paris, Milan, Munich and Amsterdam, 2002, pp. 153-177

<sup>366</sup> M. Albert, *Capitalism vs. Capitalism*, p. 107 In Japan, the relation however is even stronger with large companies and banks owning each other.

Germany has one of the lowest levels of strike activity among industrial countries.<sup>367</sup> The practice of incorporating labour unions, as well as share holders and managers in the decision-making process has been called *Mitbestimmung*.

Looking at state, capital and labour in Germany yields a different picture from England and France. Involvement from the state in the economy has been far less extensive than in France and much less centralized. It differs from the English pattern in that there is much more coordination and the presence of a more cooperative style rather than a confrontational style. In terms of our analysis of educational institutions, we can link this coordinated and cooperative style to the cultural type of the loyal civil servant. This ideal, in contrast with the English ideal of the gentleman has an orientation towards public responsibility. The notion of *Konzertierte Aktion* was coined in 1967 to denote the coordinated action of business with labour and state in Germany, but has much older origins, shows a structural resemblance with the ideal of the loyal civil servant in education. Moreover, the German apprentice system absorbs about half of all school-leavers, a much higher percentage than elsewhere. This conveys a concern for the provision of a good general level of education among the whole population, in contrast with the more ‘extreme’ educational systems of England the United States. The concerns in education thus reverberate in the German political economy, but we will return to this when we discuss the different industrial profiles of countries, later in this section.

In contrast with England, that was less inclined to develop extensive hierarchies in companies with professional external managers, Germany, like the United States, did move in this direction early on. Yet, there are also considerable differences between the working of German and American companies. Whereas the latter are characterized by fierce competition, the former are more characterized by extensive inter-firm relations. Through business associations, collaboration with quasi-public research institutes and industry-wide involvement in training schemes, expertise and technology are shared between German businesses.<sup>368</sup> In contrast with the United States, “in Germany the strong support given to cartels and other interfirm agreements by nation’s courts reflected a shared belief in the benefits of industrial cooperation”.<sup>369</sup> German business organized in conventions, syndicates and communities of interest that were largely absent in England or the United States.

From these different aspects of Germany’s political economy, we can speak of ‘cooperative capitalism’.

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<sup>367</sup> Idem, p. 123

<sup>368</sup> P. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism*, p. 26

<sup>369</sup> A.D. Chandler Jr, *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004 (1990), p. 395

## *State, Capital and Labour in the United States*

In the United States the central bank, the Federal Reserve, is independent like in England and like the German Bundesbank used to be, but there are more considerable linkages with the government. In contrast with the Bundesbank, the American president nominates the chairman of the Federal Reserve and it is subject to Congressional oversight. Moreover, the Federal Reserve has been more active in stimulating economic activity rather than merely maintaining price stability as many other central banks do. On the other hand, there is also a considerable degree of decentralization in the organization of the central bank and the links with the private banking sector are extensive. Just like in England, the banking sector concentrates a level of expertise that gives it an advantage against the government.

Through macro-economic policy, the ministries of the U.S. government have been active in stimulating the country's economy, but industrial policy has been limited. However, through the defence budget, especially high-tech companies have received support from the government. It is from this link that many innovations, from the computer to the microwave and the internet originate.

Like in England, American banks do not have the extensive partnerships with the country's business sector and instead relate to it in more market terms. Companies draw a greater part of their finance from financial markets than from bank loans, but to the extent that they take loans with banks in the United States, this is done on much more publicly-accessible balance-sheet criteria than in Germany or France.<sup>370</sup> Whereas in Germany and France, the system protects companies from external influence, the U.S. regulatory framework is highly tolerant of mergers and acquisitions, including the hostile takeover.

American labour is much more weakly organized and less influential than in the other countries. Like in England, the pattern of relation between different societal forces, and specifically between business and labour, is confrontational. Legally, there are in contrast with Germany and the Netherlands, no requirements for large firms to create work councils. But in contrast with England, labour in the United States has played a weaker role in the formulation of policy. Although there are links between for instance labour in the automotive industry and the Democratic Party, these links are weaker than that between the English unions and the Labour Party. Historically, labour has been weakly organized in the United States. This had to do in the first place with the composition of immigrants to the country, Ethnic diversity often proved to be just as strong a basis of cooperation than class interests. Moreover, because of the settler character of the United States, labour was also highly mobile, which made it hard to organize in durable structures.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> P. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism*, p. 28

<sup>371</sup> K. Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore and São Paulo: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 181

As the influence of labour is weak and the power of financial markets to pressure for change is great, top management in the United States is more free to formulate and implement policy in companies than elsewhere. They are less restrained by councils or regulations in pursuing new directions.<sup>372</sup> Like in England, there is a greater focus on the qualities of individual CEO's and their compensations are also generally higher than in Continental countries.

Looking at state, capital and labour in the United States shows strong resemblance to England, the other Anglo-Saxon countries we are discussing. However, in the United States, capitalism is more unrestrained than in England. Whereas we saw in section A that with its welfare system, England comes closer to the European Continent than to the United States, here we see that in the United States the influence of labour has been much weaker than in England. As a result, large companies and the captains of industry are in a more powerful position than in England. In the field of education, we distinguished the expansive individual as the character in American development. Just like in England, this goes together with the focus on free enterprise and little state interference, but whereas in England it is more bound up with concerns of status and gentlemanly contest, in the United States it is bound up with a more unrestrained and innovative version of competition. Between companies, relations within a sector are characterized much more by competition than in for instance Germany. There we saw that business associations, sector-wide training and other forms of cooperation led to a spread of knowledge and technology between companies. In the United States by contrast, it is the much more free flow of individuals, working for one company and then moving to a next, that facilitates the spread of knowledge and technology. Whereas we saw that in Germany inter-firm agreements and their support by the courts reflected a shared belief in the value of cooperation, in the United States the passage of the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890 and its enforcement by the federal courts reflected a shared belief in the value of competition.<sup>373</sup> As a characterization of the political economy of the United States, we can speak of 'competitive capitalism'.

### *State, Capital and Labour in the Netherlands*

In the political economy of the Netherlands, there is a tradition of planning by the state. There are several notable planning agencies and economists like Jan Tinbergen contributed to the conceptualization of planning the economy. However, although such agencies hold great authority and informally they can have much influence, their formal powers are extremely limited. In contrast with France, where planning by the state is common, industrial policy in the Netherlands has been limited and planning agencies have performed more of a guiding

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<sup>372</sup> P. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism*, p. 29

<sup>373</sup> A.D. Chandler Jr, *Scale and Scope*, p. 395



role.<sup>374</sup> In this sense, the Netherlands approaches the Anglo-Saxon model more than the Continental model.

And like the Anglo-Saxon countries, the Netherlands has a relatively large stock market capitalization as well as an internationally-operating banking sector. However, the financial sector and its large banks like ABN, Fortis (who merged in 2009), ING and Rabobank do have more extensive cooperative relations with Dutch business. The latter for instance has its origins in local credit councils, specifically for the food and agricultural business. Traditionally, there has been more of stakeholder model than a shareholder model in the country. By law, large companies are obliged to have work councils with regular meetings and specific rights.

Labour is stronger organized than in France, but weaker than in Germany. The percentage of unionized workers is also lower than in other typical Continental countries like Sweden, Denmark or Austria, and comparable to the level in Switzerland.<sup>375</sup> Like all these other Continental countries however, the relations between business, state and labour are consultative and cooperative. The polder model, which we described before in the formation of Dutch modern education is also used to describe these relations in the contemporary Dutch system. There is extensive and regularized coordination in the ‘tripartite’ meetings between state, employers organizations and labour unions.

From the early twentieth century, Dutch society was organized in ‘pillars’ of Protestants, Catholics, Socialists and Liberals. This situation emerged from tensions between these groups of which we discussed the *Schoolstrijd* in the previous section. Dutch society was divided in different groups that organized their own schools, unions, employers’ organizations, sports clubs as well as women’s leagues, nurseries and newspapers. It was an organization from below, which at the top was characterized by coordination in directorates between the pillars.

With the breakdown of the pillars in the 1960’s, the relations in the Dutch political economy had to be reconstituted and the different societal forces did not cooperate well. Labour militancy went up, although by international standards, it remained relatively low. The coalition of 1982 of the Liberals (VVD) and the Christian Democrats (CDA), under Ruud Lubbers’ *no nonsense* policy, resembles the neo-liberal courses followed by England and the United States at the same time.<sup>376</sup> The government sought to reorganize public finances to reduce the financing deficit and worked for an economic recovery after the recession of the previous years through improving business profitability and lowering wage costs. However, in contrast with these Anglo-Saxon countries, the settlement in the Netherlands was forged in

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<sup>374</sup> P.J. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe*, Ithaca, New York, and London: Cornell University Press, 1985, pp. 61 and 116

<sup>375</sup> J. Visser, and A. Hemerijck, *‘A Dutch Miracle’: Job Growth, Welfare Reform and Corporatism in the Netherlands*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997, p. 83

<sup>376</sup> Idem, p. 100

the tripartite cooperation with employers and employees organizations with the Accord of Wassenaar. Wage moderation went together with concessions from business and with the accord, a pattern of future peaceful cooperation was achieved.<sup>377</sup> Albeit in a more decentralized way, the system compares to the German *konzertierte Aktion*.

Like the Anglo-Saxon countries, reforms led to high economic growth and employment growth in the 1990's, but in contrast with these countries, this did not go together with large increases in income inequality.<sup>378</sup>

The political economy of the Netherlands thus resembles the corporatism of other Continental countries, yet on a more liberal basis. In the section of education, we identified the stern burgher as the typical character of the Netherlands. It corresponds with the more decentralized and liberal approach of the Netherlands, which brings it closer to Anglo-Saxon countries, whereas the more egalitarian and cooperative character of burgher-like patterns, bring it closer to the Continental model. The corporatist model of Sweden and Austria is based on very high labour organization and decade-long dominance of the social-democrats in government.<sup>379</sup> Dutch labour is much weaker organized and its policy has much less been dominated by leftist parties. Nevertheless, it did develop the cooperative and consensual structures of corporatism. We can thus characterize the Dutch political economy as liberal corporatist capitalism.

### *From Structure to Policy*

Before moving on to the second part of our discussion of patterns in the political economy in the West, we will first summarize how our analysis of state, capital and labour in the five countries explain the patterns of divergence in the policies of these countries that we encountered.

Looking back at table 2 column 1, we see that France pursued a rigorous stimulating policy. This reflects the way the state has interfered in the economy in France and the influence the state has had over the central bank. The contractionary policy in Germany and the Netherlands is explained by the independence and strength of state institutions like the Bundesbank. England's shifting and unclear pattern of macroeconomic policy is explained by the sequence of Labour and Conservative governments as well as the strong autonomy of the Bank of England. Macroeconomic policy also relates to the currency and the opposite policy followed by England and Germany is explained by the different relationship between the financial sector and industry in both countries. In England, the financial sector is globally

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<sup>377</sup> Idem, p. 81

<sup>378</sup> Idem, p. 11

<sup>379</sup> P.J. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets*, p. 98

involved, leading it to prefer a strong currency. This was often pursued at the detriment of English industry that saw a strong pound undermine its competitive position. In Germany, the financial sector is deeply intertwined with domestic industry, making its objectives converge. Together they advocated a low currency to stimulate German exports.

Turning to column 2, we saw that France most vigorously pursued a form of industrial policy. This can be explained by the way French finance influences French companies and these financial actors in turn are influenced by the state. The absence of a clear industrial policy in England reflects the weakness of state (the Treasury) vis-à-vis industry, finance and the central bank as well as the more confrontational relationship between finance and industry, which is also characteristic of the United States. The intertwining of finance and industry in Germany has led to a form of industrial policy that was developed between these poles and involved relatively little state involvement.

Finally, column 3 dealt with incomes policy. The organized structure and confrontational style of labour in England has led business and state to concessions in developing incomes policy, although the agreements were often unstable. The strength of the French state and the low level of organization of French labour led to little concessions in terms of incomes policy. The weakness of labour as well as the more liberal approach of the state led to weak incomes policy in the United States. The very high level of organization of German labour and its cooperative style has led to long-term agreements between state, industry and labour. From a lower level of organized labour, the Netherlands has followed a more liberal version of similar long-term agreements.

In our discussion of the political economy of the five countries and the comparison with the field of education, we have referred to the notion of structural resemblances. This notion concerns the context, or habitat, of human activity. Whereas in chapter II we spoke of the importance of institutions, the notion of structural resemblances takes this idea further by focusing on a certain institutional complex or pattern. The institutions or context in a field like political economy resemble those in other fields like education. The character of institutions that informs human behaviour and thought show a form of recurrence throughout fields of society. Whereas structural resemblances elaborate on the contextual side, or habitat, of human activity, the concept of *style* will be used to elaborate on the habitus side of human life. Next to the context in which people live, they develop certain habits, mentally or in behaviour through socialization. In chapter II we encountered this in the form of the relevance of a specific ethos. If we broaden from an ethos to speak of habits that pervade a society in different fields, we will call this its style. Whereas centralization, extensive bureaucracy and a educational institutions for a technical elite form the context of French modernization in different fields, the concomitant style that pervades these fields can be described as *dirigisme*. It describes how Louis XIV organized government, Napoleon the technical education system and 20<sup>th</sup> century presidents the French economy. It is also the *modus operandi* of the French character of the technocratic elite. The German political economy that we characterized as

cooperative capitalism, with its institutional structures of tripartite alignment, strongly cohesive unions and cooperating businesses has as its counterpart a style of *concerted action*. This also returns in the spirit of service and duty in Lutheranism and the cultural type of the loyal civil servant. The more liberal organized countries are characterized by a style of competition. In both England and the United States, we describe the style of action as *fierce competition*. But whereas in England this is connected with more coherently organized societal forces (in labour and state), the competitiveness of games in English education and the character of the educated gentleman, in the United States it goes together with more decentralized societal forces, the conquest of the frontier and the character of the expansive individual. For the Netherlands, we speak of *restrained competition*, linking this style of action to the institutions of tripartite decentralized cooperation, the polder model and the character of the stern burgher. Table 3 summarizes the ways we have called the types of capitalism in the five countries, the style attributed to these countries and brings back the cultural types from our discussion of education. From this table, overall patterns that we are discerning throughout this chapter become clear.

**Table 3: Overall Patterns from Political Economy**

	Type of Political Economy	Style	Cultural Type
<b>Germany</b>	Cooperative Capitalism	Concerted Action	Loyal Civil Servant
<b>France</b>	Bureaucratically-planned Capitalism	Dirigisme	Technocratic Elite
<b>England</b>	Personal Capitalism	Fierce Competition	Educated Gentleman
<b>United States</b>	Unrestrained Capitalism	Fierce Competition	Expansive Individual
<b>Netherlands</b>	Liberal Corporatist Capitalism	Restrained Competition	Stern Burgher

## 2). Political Economy II: Economic Profiles of Western Countries

In the final part of this section we will turn to another aspect of the political economy of the countries that we are studying. We started this section with a brief summary of how the countries differed in the policies that they have pursued in different fields. We then went on to explain these patterns of policy through the structure of and relations between the large

societal forces of state, capital and labour in these countries. In this discussion, we noticed comparable patterns as those in the field of education. Sometimes this concerned direct links. The educational institutions created in France since Napoleon to provide the country with a technical elite, are for instance directly linked with the power that the state holds in France over the economy. Furthermore, we saw links with education that were less direct, but which exhibited structural resemblances or the same style in both fields. This for instance concerned the competitive sports in the education of the English gentleman and the competition in the City of London, or the service emphasized in the German educational institutions and the cooperative spirit in its industrial relations.

In the remainder of this section, we will focus on an issue in political economy that we will relate more directly to one aspect of a country's education system. We will look at the industrial or economic profile of countries. The countries we study have strengths in different sectors and their strengths and weaknesses have a particular character. We will link these different economic profiles with the field of education by looking at what skills the national systems produce. Different educational systems produce different set or types of skills in a work force which in turn affects the strengths and weaknesses of economic activity in different sectors.

After we have linked these two fields, industrial profile and skills formation, we will turn to their origins. We will look at the historical patterns and local traditions that have produced the skill 'regimes' of countries. In our discussion, we will not discuss all five countries extensively. We will discuss the different industrial profiles and skills regimes in the context of our distinction between Anglo-Saxon and Continental countries. In our discussion of historical origins we will illustrate it with England and the United States as examples of the former and Germany as an example of the latter. In the discussion of historical origins, we will draw links with the concepts we have developed in the course of this chapter. In particular, we will emphasize the relevance of *critical shaping moments* for the industrial profiles of countries. More precisely, we will see that certain settlements that decided the fate of artisans in countries strongly shaped subsequent development.

### *Two Economic Profiles: Different Skills Sets*

If we focus on two countries that most strongly approximate the two models of section A, the United States for the Anglo-Saxon model and Germany for the Continental model, we see that their economies excel in different things and they specialize in different sectors. Whereas the U.S. for instance overshadows Germany in high-tech sectors, Germany has a lead in the heavy industrial field over the US. If we look at the number of patents that these countries have been granted in different sectors, we see a similar pattern. The U.S. has particular strengths in fields like information technology, semiconductors, telecommunications, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, which Germany lacks. By contrast, it had received relatively more patents in

fields like civil engineering, transport, agricultural machines, engines and machine tools, in which the U.S. is weak.<sup>380</sup>

Moreover, not only are the two countries innovative in different fields, but the character of innovation also differs between them. We can distinguish radical innovation from incremental innovation. Radical innovation concerns great shifts in product lines, the creation of entirely new goods, or major changes to the production process, whereas incremental innovation is characterized by continuous, but small-scale improvements to existing products and production processes.<sup>381</sup> Radical innovation is much more common in the fast-moving technology sectors and we thus see that it is more characteristic of the economy of the United States. Incremental innovation is more important for maintaining an advantage in complex and extensive production processes like capital goods like heavy machinery and thus is characteristic more of the German economy.<sup>382</sup> One measure of the level of radical innovation in an economy is the prevalence of references to scientific articles in patent classes. Anglo-Saxon countries like Ireland, the United States, New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom score higher than Continental countries like Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, France or Germany.<sup>383</sup> At the same time however, Anglo-Saxon countries have been characterized as low-skill economies, whereas Continental countries have been characterized as high-skill economies.<sup>384</sup> This is because the overall level of skills of the whole workforce is distinctively lower in Anglo-Saxon countries. Next to the high-tech production, Anglo-Saxon countries also have extensive sectors staffed by low-skilled labour in standardized production. The Continental countries, who excel less in high-tech, by contrast have a higher overall level of skills throughout the workforce. Whereas the low-skilled blue-collar workforce of Anglo-Saxon countries often engage in the production of goods that competes with competitors mainly over price, Continental production has more of its competitive edge in quality. The high skill, high wage and high-value added economy of Continental countries justifies higher wages with higher quality. The prevalence of both low-skilled labour and high-tech production makes it better to speak of a bifurcated skills profile rather than a low skills profile. Whereas Germany is characterized by the strength of high investments in

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<sup>380</sup> P. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism*, pp. 42-43

<sup>381</sup> Idem, pp. 38-39

<sup>382</sup> At the beginning of the chapter we mentioned that the features that distinguish Continental countries from Anglo-Saxon countries within the West are often repeated on a broader scale between the East Asia on the one hand (with Continental features) and the West as a whole on the other (with Anglo-Saxon features). Interestingly, in this field of forms of innovation, Masaaki Imai argues in his book *Kaizen* that Japanese business is characterized by incremental improvement, which is to be characterized with the Western more abrupt explosive model of innovation. Masaaki Imai, *Kaizen: The Key to Japan's Competitive Success*

<sup>383</sup> I. Mares, 'Firms and the Welfare State: When, Why, and How Does Social Policy Matter to Employers?', in: P.A. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 175

<sup>384</sup> K. Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve*, p. 5

manufacturing skills, but has weaknesses in the commitment of firms to further training and a scarcity certain high end skills, the United States has an abundance of high-end skills and an underinvestment in traditional manufacturing skills.<sup>385</sup>

We can understand industrial profiles better if we focus on the *type* of skills. From the work of Gary Becker, we can distinguish between general and specific skills. *General skills* are fully transportable and have value to many employers. *Specific skills* pertain more to the specific companies and are thus not transferable. Examples of fields with general skills are computing, management skills and biotechnological research. Specific skills are learned by vocational training for instance or the certification for the use of certain programmes, machines or models. As general skills are transferable, companies have little incentive to invest in them. Other companies could easily poach on their investments by employing the employees of others. By contrast, companies have more of an incentive to invest in specific skills as they know people will not use them to go to other companies.<sup>386</sup> Estevez-Abe, Iversen and Soskice distinguish a third intermediate type. Between the two stand industry-specific skills. These are not highly general, but can be transferred between the companies of a sector. The different types of skills are related to different types of production. Fordist mass production does not require a high level of skills in its employees. This type of low skill production is typical of the traditional American automobile industry. Diversified mass production however aims at mass producing a variety of products and requires workers to have great skill with the specific products the company makes and the machines used. These company-specific skills are typical of for instance the Japanese automotive sector or electrical appliance makers. Industry-specific skills are used in for instance high quality craftsmanship in small-scale production. It can however also be typical of mass production in high quality industrial goods and this type of production is common in Germany. General skills are more typical of companies that work in fields with radical innovation. This concerns software companies, consultancy firms, financial institutions that often employ math PhDs as well as biotechnology firms that employ a high amount of advanced scientists. This is typical of the high skill firms in the United States.<sup>387</sup>

The prevalence of different types of skills in countries is related to other features of the difference between Continental and Anglo-Saxon countries. It is first of all related to the patterns of competition and coordination between companies. Employees are less incentivized to invest in industry-specific skills, but companies are more interested in helping to finance the creation of these skills if their competitors cannot poach on them. This is thus more developed when there is more coordination between companies in a sector through for instance participation in industry-wide educational programs. We saw that this was typical of

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<sup>385</sup> K. Thelen, *idem*, pp. 5-10

<sup>386</sup> *Idem*, pp. 11-15

<sup>387</sup> M. Estevez-Abe, T. Iversen and D. Soskice, 'Social Protection and the Formation of Skills: A Reinterpretation of the Welfare State', in: P.A. Hall and D. Soskice (eds), *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 148

the cooperative capitalism of Germany. On the other hand, individuals are more likely to invest in their general skills as a multitude of companies is interested in these skills. They are more likely to prevail in highly competitive markets like that of the United States.

Secondly, the different skills profiles are linked to different educational systems. Company-specific skills like those used in Japan are linked to on-the-job training programs. Industry-specific skills are linked to an educational system with a high degree of vocational training and a general high level of participation in this education by a large part of the work force, which is typical of Germany. We see here the concern with a good basic level of education among the population at large that we distinguished in the development of modern education in Germany. The bifurcation of low skilled work with high general skills, typical of the United States is linked with an educational system that is more differentiated and in which several top universities are present.

Thirdly, the different skills profiles are linked with different types of social protection that also reflect the different between different political economic models. Employment protection concerns the security to keep one's job. This is connected with firm-specific skills as employees need to be convinced to spend time and energy in developing skills that outside the company cannot be used. These skills prevalent in the Japanese economy are thus connected with the country's policy of life-time employment. For industry-specific skills employment protection matters less as employees can move to different firms in a sector. To invest in these skills however, there has to be some form of protection that makes it possible to find a new job in a sector. This is achieved more by a system of unemployment protection, in which income reduction as a result of unemployment is not very severe. Unemployment protection makes it possible to look for new suitable jobs in which one's industry-specific skills can be utilized and this type of protection is typical of Continental countries. By contrast, in a system with little overall social protection, individuals are not incentivized to invest in company-specific or industry-specific skills. They will focus on general skills that can be used in many companies. The low social protection system of the United States is thus connected with its focus on general skills.<sup>388</sup>

Finally, we can link the different skills profiles to another important aspect of the difference between Continental and Anglo-Saxon countries, namely income inequality. General skills come to a great degree from academic education. For the part of the population that is academically weak however, vocational training provides the best opportunity to develop valued skills and thus secure a higher wage. In economies that require a high level of industry-specific skills, companies will be interested in making sure that there is a highly developed vocational system on which they will cooperate. In economies that focus more on general skills and low skills, companies are less interested in creating such a system for the population at large. We can see a pattern that the prevalence of vocational education is linked to income inequality. Countries that have a high incidence of vocational training like Germany, but also the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden and Denmark have lower income

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<sup>388</sup>Idem, pp. 149-153



inequality than countries where this type of training is less prevalent like the United States, Canada, Ireland and the England.<sup>389</sup>

We have thus characterized different industrial profiles in Anglo-Saxon and Continental countries and we have linked this aspect of political economy to an aspect of a country's educational system, namely the formation of skills. What remains now is to describe how these differences in skill formation developed historically. For this, we will contrast the development of Germany with that of England and the United States.

To explain the prevalence of high levels of skill or craftsmanship in countries, we can turn to the influence of cultural heritages. For the case of Japan, Robert Bellah for instance pointed towards traditions of intense focus and perfectionism in practical work deriving from religious traditions like Zen Buddhism.<sup>390</sup> Similar traditions can be traced in Germany. Medieval German technicians were already famed for their practical mastery of fields like mining and metallurgy.<sup>391</sup> More specifically, like Zen Buddhism, Germany has religious traditions that emphasize practical education as well as perfectionism, like the pietism of Johann Arndt and Philip Jacob Spener.<sup>392</sup>

However, here we will focus more on the development of the specific institutions that have to do with the development of skills. When comparing Germany with England and the United States, a central factor has been the fate of the traditional artisans in the course of modernization. In this process, there were what we have earlier called critical shaping moments. In this field they relate to what Thelen calls the character of the settlement between employers in skill-based industries, artisans and the early trade unions.<sup>393</sup> In Germany, the traditional artisans were integrated in the modern production process, transformed, and this way apprenticeship and extensive training remained in the modern industrial economy. In England however, the power of the artisans was broken and they went into decline, whereas the United States had from its beginning less of a tradition of skilled artisanship. From these

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<sup>389</sup> Idem, p. 178. France falls in between the two both in terms of income inequality and the incidence of vocational training. We can link this to the elitist system we described in the section on education. In contrast with Anglo-Saxon countries, elitist education has a stronger public focus rather than on the private sector. This corresponds with the country's industrial profile. Fields in which the French economy particularly excels are for instance (nuclear) energy and infrastructure.

<sup>390</sup> R.N. Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion*

<sup>391</sup> D. Cardwell, *Wheels, Clocks, and Rockets: A History of Technology*, New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001 (1994), pp. 32-33

<sup>392</sup> S. Ozment, *A Mighty Fortress*, p. 130

<sup>393</sup> This section of the development of skills in the three countries is based on K. Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve*.

different historical patterns, the different pattern in industrial profiles that we described can be understood.

The central factor in Germany's development was thus the survival of an independent artisanal sector.<sup>394</sup> Important for the settlement between the different parties, or what we have called a critical shaping moment, was at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century culminating in the 1897 legislation. In the 1870's social democratic labour movements surged in Germany. Whereas one might expect that they played an initially important role in developing the skills regime of the country, this was not the case. The labour movements wanted to control organized workers and this pitted them against the artisanal sector that had much influence in this field. The artisanal sector survived despite the labour movements as a result of government interference. With the growth of leftist movements, the authoritarian regime of the time bolstered the artisans and aligned with them against the growing labour movements. It is thus important to note that the policies that laid the basis for a revolutionary transformation of industry had their origins in conservative actions by the state.

The state thus sought to bolster the organized handicraft, or *Handwerk* sector against organized labour. First, this was done by increasing the power of the voluntary guilds (*Innungen*). They were given the power to regulate apprenticeship and adjudicate conflicts. A more elaborate state intervention came with the Handicraft Protection Law of 1897. Next to the voluntary guilds, the law established compulsory handicraft chambers (*Handwerkskammern*) who had great powers in regulating the content and quality of craft apprenticeship. It was from this conservative or restorative policy that the core of the modern German vocational training system was established. An important factor in further modernizing the system and influencing the formulation of the 1897 law were the industrial associations (*Gewerbevereine*) that brought together small factory owners and handicraft producers. Originating from the southern regions of Baden-Wurttemberg, Hesse, Thuringia and Bavaria, these associations were much more market-oriented than the guilds and they developed systems of mutual support and together promoted education. The law eventually thus fused the guild-based organizational form with pro-market and self-help associations. The high level of craftsmanship in the modern German economy can thus be traced to state intervention that combined conservative and progressive elements and through which the traditional artisanate was incorporated in modern industry. Similar to what we saw in chapter II when we looked at East Asia, we see here that a tradition, that of craftsmanship, is modernized and placed in the modern factory.

Whereas the state played a decisive role in the protection and survival of artisans in Germany, it played an opposite role in England.<sup>395</sup> The state in England contributed to the deregulation of the traditional apprenticeship system and did not help to create a plant-based training system like in Germany. In England, there did not develop the elaborate cooperative

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<sup>394</sup> K. Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve*, pp. 39-55

<sup>395</sup> Idem, pp. 92-104

structures, but instead as the apprenticeship system declined, there developed a trench warfare between unions and employers, which we above described as the typical confrontational style of England's political economy.

Whereas the guilds persisted in other countries until they were abolished somewhere in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the English guilds faded early and gradually, starting centuries earlier. It was the Statute of Artificers of 1563 that codified the regulations regarding apprenticeship and the practice of certain trades. However, the state never provided for a mechanism to institutionally enforce it. And as the new industries developed, the new occupations were held to be beyond the reach of the old law. Thus even before the repeal of the law in 1814, the guilds and the apprenticeship system was already long in decline. Like in Germany, the state was opposed to labour movements, it did foster the development of mutual aid and insurance groups for workers or 'box clubs'. The upper classes of England saw this as a means to curb expenditure by parishes under the controversial Poor Laws. Conform the patterns we have discerned in England and like with the apprenticeship system, state interference was kept minimal and self-help should be fostered.<sup>396</sup> Throughout its development, England experienced bitter struggles between unions and employers, and its voluntarist tradition led to the demise of the apprenticeship system and the low skill level in English industry.

Turning to the case of the United States<sup>397</sup>, a central factor in the development of skills was the absence of guild structures and traditions in the New World. The context of apprenticeship in the United States resembles the features we described when we looked at education in section B. For instance, apprenticeship was much more tied with civic education and Christian morality. Masters were required to not just focus on the trade, but also to give instruction in the liberal arts. Furthermore, the limited oversight of the system was provided by the officers of local towns and countries. The system of apprenticeship was even less enforced than in England. Anyone could call himself a master and take up apprentices and there were no enforced standards of competence. As an observer of American society, Tocqueville already described this situation: "Between the workman and the master there are frequent relations, but no real association".<sup>398</sup> With the great mobility in American society, artisans often also worked as farmers and had to work with a great degree of self-reliance. And rather than specializing in a particular craft, these men became the proverbial jacks-of-all-trades. Rather than artisans identifying with a particular trade, the Yankee tradesman emerged. Operating in a greater institutional vacuum than in England, there was little incentive for youths to follow long years of training. The problem of runaway apprentices was larger than in England. However, in the United States there was no stigma on those who did not finish their terms.

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<sup>396</sup> From such arguments Thomas Malthus for instance argued for the abolishment of the Poor Laws. (T.R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2007 (1798))

<sup>397</sup> K. Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve*, pp. 178-214

<sup>398</sup> A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, p. 161 Interestingly, Tocqueville describes in this chapter that the relations in manufacturing are the harshest that ever existed and he warns of the coming of a 'labor aristocracy'.

They were actually celebrated for their initiative and daring. One of the most famous runaway apprentices was the inventor-politician-author, Benjamin Franklin.

As we saw in the first part of this section, labour was weakly organized in America as a result of great mobility and ethnic rivalry. Unions developed later and weaker than elsewhere. Another factor that had to do with the weakness of labour in the United States was the response of corporations to the shortage of skilled labour throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Employers shifted to strategies that lowered their dependence on skilled labour. Very early on, American employers moved to the mass production of standardized goods and looked for skill-displacing technologies. A consequence of this is the Fordist mode of production that we described as a feature of the low-skill element in the political economy of the United States. Thus throughout the process of modernization, employers in the U.S. went much further than their counterparts in England to marginalize unions and reorganize production to become less dependent on skilled labour. Whereas in England, the shop steward emerged to negotiate collective bargains with the management, in the U.S. the foremen emerged who worked with employers against the unions. As the relations between workers and management hardened in the United States, young people were discouraged to follow vocational training and instead turned more to academic education for their ambitions.

We saw in the first part of the section on political economy that the patterns between countries resemble the patterns between these countries in the field of education. Moreover, we established some concrete links between the two fields. In this part of the section, we can draw an even stronger link between the two fields. The different industrial profiles, specifically the difference between the Continental and the Anglo-Saxon economies, can be traced back to the development of the skills regime of a country. In particular, the fate of artisans and systems of apprenticeship and craftsmanship go a long way to explain the specific strengths and weaknesses of certain economies. Finally, we have encountered in this description of skills, features we found in other fields, like the influence of civic education, Christianity and localism in the United States, the confrontational style of both England and the U.S., and the more cooperative style and public orientation of Germany.

#### **D). Modern thought in the West**

In 1989, Francois Mitterand organized the celebration of the bicentennial anniversary of the French Revolution in a meeting at which many heads of state were present. They commemorated how the ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood, core concepts of the modern world, burst onto the political scene with the French Revolution. Margaret Thatcher, who was also present, was less pleased about all this and she was sure to emphasize that

British freedom did not originate with this revolution, but instead originated with the Magna Charta of 1215.

This anecdote highlights an issue in the last field in which we want to distinguish patterns of modernization in the West. From the material field of political economy in the last section, we will now turn towards the realm of ideas and focus on patterns in modern thought. Specifically, though not exclusively, we will focus on one movement in modern thought, namely the Enlightenment. This is because the Enlightenment is often viewed as the quintessential philosophy of modernity and in chapter I we showed how the thought of this movement is linked with the processes of modernization. Furthermore, the Enlightenment is generally viewed as a unitary supranational movement. In his work on the movement, Peter Gay for instance opens with the remark: “There were many *philosophes*, (...) but there was only one Enlightenment”.<sup>399</sup> In this section, I would like to argue that, the supranational features notwithstanding, there are profound differences in how the Enlightenment developed between the countries we study here in. The *philosophe* that Peter Gay mentions was for instance a very specific type of thinker, and one that did not exist in certain countries. This thinker was typical of France and like with the bicentennial celebration we mentioned, there is a strong French bias when discussing modern thought. The Enlightenment has been defined very differently and precisely because we want to emphasize the biased character of many definitions and show how divergent countries were on this account, it might be better to speak of modern thought in the following, rather than the Enlightenment. We will namely also refer to authors that are often not held to be part of that project, but for which we will argue that it is important to consider them on this account.

Modern thought is very diverse and especially the Enlightenment was strongly directed at the understanding of the natural world and its first principles. Our focus here will be limited more to the social theory of these thinkers.

The differences we will distinguish in the modern thought of the five countries will show parallels with the differences we distinguished in the other fields of education and political economy. We will see structural resemblances as well the characters and specific styles of countries in the field of modern thought.

More so than with the field of political economy, in which a unitary type of regime for a country can be distinguished, there is much diversity within countries between thinkers. The patterns we will distinguish will thus also encounter many exceptions in the work of other thinkers and we will try to take note of this as much as possible. However, these exceptions do not undermine the possibility of distinguishing overall patterns in a country. The atypical character of a certain thinker can even strengthen our case. For instance, Montesquieu will emerge as atypical of modern French thought. However, we have to note that his work was taken up much less by his own countrymen and strongly criticized by them, whereas it has been most consequential in another country, the United States.

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<sup>399</sup> P. Gay, *The Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Paganism*, New York: W.W. Norton & Comp., 1995, p. 3

## England

Before we discuss the Enlightenment or modern thought in France, which has often been explicitly or implicitly regarded as paradigmatic for the West, we will turn to England, in which modern thought assumed a different character. Interesting about England is that it has simultaneously been the object of admiration of many enlightened thinkers, while at the same time it has been argued that it did not have an Enlightenment.<sup>400</sup>

Voltaire for instance greatly admired the English in his *Lettres philosophiques ou Lettres anglaises*<sup>401</sup> and Diderot too spoke highly of the English system and English thought. Early modern thinkers like John Locke and Isaac Newton were seen as exemplars by Enlightenment thinkers throughout the West.

Yet on the other hand, people have also argued that England did not have an Enlightenment. It lacked revolutionary thought,<sup>402</sup> or it was in Taine's words wanting in "lofty speculation". Modern English thought is characterized by its practical nature. Thinkers were not chairbound, but worked in the market place where ideas were a trade. Produced for a wide popular readership. Joseph Addison for instance wrote: "I have brought Philosophy out of the Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables and in Coffee Houses"<sup>403</sup>. English coffee table philosophy was concrete, intertwined with the world of praxis and entertaining. Eighteenth century thinkers like Joseph Addison, Adam Smith, David Hume and Edmund Burke were philosophers, essayists as well as often practical politicians. Quoting the historian Thompson, Roy Porter states that nuance was key to English modern thought: "The Enlightenment proceeded in Britain not like one of those flood-tides massing against a crumbling dyke, but like the tide which seeps into the eroded shores, mudflats and creeks, of an estuary whose declivities are ready to receive it"<sup>404</sup>. From John

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<sup>400</sup> In the following we will speak of Britain instead of England to include thinkers from Scotland, who were very important in modern English thought. It could be argued that Scotland has to be understood separately, which has for instance been done by Arthur Herman in *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*. (A. Herman, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World: The True Story of How Western Europe's Poorest Nation Created Our World & Everything in It*, New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001) However, to the pattern of modern thought that we will describe here Scottish and English thinkers contributed together.

<sup>401</sup> Voltaire, as quoted in: R. Porter, 'The Enlightenment in England', in: R. Porter and M. Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1981), p. 1

<sup>402</sup> An exception to this general characteristic was William Godwin, who did develop a revolutionary theory of equality and supported the French Revolution. His work comes closer to that of Condorcet and Saint-Simon than that of other English thinkers.

<sup>403</sup> Joseph Addison, as quoted in: idem, p. 5

<sup>404</sup> Edward P. Thompson, as quoted in: idem, p. 7

Locke to Alexander Pope, a philosophy of expediency was propagated in which acquired knowledge should be relevant for practical affairs.

Connected with the less speculative and revolutionary character of the English Enlightenment, is something we also encountered in the modernization of education, namely a relatively peaceful coexistence with religion. Although they often did propagate reform, thinkers like Shaftesbury, Newton, Hutcheson and Smith were all believers. The most critical of religion was David Hume. His scepticism however, did not lead to an all-out rejection of religion like many French thinkers. A contemporary wrote on his time in France: “Poor Hume, who on your side of the water was thought to have too little religion, is here thought to have too much”<sup>405</sup>. The Enlightenment thus lived much more in harmony with the world of religion: “The simple fact is that Enlightenment goals – like criticism, sensibility of faith in progress – thrived in England *within* piety. There was no need to overthrow religion itself because there was no pope, no inquisition, no Jesuits, no monopolistic priesthood with a stranglehold on children through education and on families through confession.”<sup>406</sup> The Voltairean *ecrasez l’infame* was absent from English modern thought.

Another characteristic of the English Enlightenment concerns the answer thinkers gave to one of the central problems that concerned modern thought in all countries. The problem concerns the way the negative effects of the pursuit of self-interest can be tempered. Emanating from growing market relations, this problem became more prominent.<sup>407</sup> In the countries we study here, different answers were given to this problem. What is notable about the answers of English thinkers is the extent to which they saw solutions to the problem of self-interest in the spontaneous association of people. This first of all concerned the argument that the pursuit of self-interest in itself leads to beneficiary effects. Bernard Mandeville stated the link between “private vices” and “public benefits”. Most famously of course, Adam Smith’s invisible hand brought this link about: “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.”<sup>408</sup> It was an enlightened form of self-interest that these English thinkers believed was in harmony with the public good. Similarly, Jeremy Bentham considered the public good simply to be the aggregate of private goods, or “the greatest happiness for the greatest number”. Adam Smith’s invisible hand paralleled Newton’s universe in which individual atoms together formed an ordered and rational whole. And from the pursuit of enlightened self-interest in the market, other salutary social effects followed. For thinkers like Smith and Hume, the spirit of

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<sup>405</sup> Quoted from: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 40

<sup>406</sup> R. Porter, ‘The Enlightenment in England’, p. 6

<sup>407</sup> In the realm of politics, Hobbes discerned a similar problem, for which his authoritarian Leviathan was the solution. (T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, London: Penguin Books, 1985 (1651))

<sup>408</sup> A. Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Harmondsworth, New York, Ringwood, Ontario and Auckland: Penguin Books, 1981 (1776), p. 14

commerce promoted liberty, civility and order.<sup>409</sup> Apart from these dynamics, authors also saw a different solution to the problem of egotism that also worked in spontaneous association. Many thinkers held that all people had an innate sense of morality. According to Shaftesbury, Ferguson and Hutchison a moral sense was innate to the human mind. For Smith and Hume, such a sense was inherent in human sensibility. Furthermore, these thinkers were part of a general movement in England that has been called the “culture of sensibility” and a “cult of benevolence”.<sup>410</sup> Campaigns against blood sports, poor relief programs, charitable foundations and campaigns for generally more humane relations were typical in this period.

The solutions to the problem deriving from the pursuit of self-interest were thus in England sought in the sphere of private association.<sup>411</sup> Rather than turning to the state or reforming the market, self-interest was supposed to be enlightened as well as supplemented by our innate moral sense. In line with what we described about England before, these solutions are ‘gentlemanly’. Indeed, a rational gentleman should be sociable, or in Johnson’s phrase “clubbable”.<sup>412</sup>

The strong faith in spontaneous and private association went together with a great openness to diversity and less dogmatic views. Above we already mentioned the scepticism in the Anglican Church regarding absolute knowledge. For John Milton truth requires change and dissent: “Truth is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition”.<sup>413</sup> Later, John Stuart Mill would make the secular version of the same argument to keep knowledge vital.<sup>414</sup> The greater openness to diversity is linked with a belief in the limits of human rationality. Passions and interests dominate life and “reason is but a slave of the passions”, as Hume argued.<sup>415</sup> And for Alexander Pope “opinions are like watches, - None, goes just alike, but each man trusts his own”.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>409</sup> A.O. Hirschmann, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978 (1977)

<sup>410</sup> G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 137

<sup>411</sup> For Lord Acton there was a benevolent force in history that led to the further spread of freedom. (J.E.E.D. Acton, *The History of Freedom*, Ottawa and Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1993 (1877))

<sup>412</sup> Samuel Johnson, as quoted in: R. Porter, ‘The Enlightenment in England’, p. 15

<sup>413</sup> John Milton, as quoted in: W.R. Mead, *God and Gold*, p. 211

<sup>414</sup> J.S. Mill, ‘On Liberty’ (1859), in: J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism, On Liberty, Considerations on Representative Government, Remarks on Bentham’s Philosophy*, G. Williams (ed.), London and Rutland, Vermont: 1998, pp. 107-120

<sup>415</sup> In this sense, we can link the field of social philosophy to epistemology. The more pluralist social philosophy of England is connected with the country’s empiricist epistemology. In both fields, thinkers reject the absolutist claims of individual reasoning.

<sup>416</sup> Alexander Pope, as quoted in: W.R. Mead, *God and Gold*, p. 219



The practical character and stress on diversity in English modern thought also went together with an attachment to local and concrete traditions and conventions. In the words of Edmund Burke<sup>417</sup>: “Civil freedom, gentlemen, is not, as many have endeavoured to persuade you, a thing that lies hid in the depth of abstruse science. It is a blessing and a benefit, not an abstract speculation... Far from any resemblance to those propositions in geometry and metaphysics which admit no medium, but must be true or false in all their latitude, social and civil freedom, like all other things in common life, are variously mixed and modified, enjoyed in very different degrees, and shaped into an infinite diversity of forms, according to the temper and circumstances of every community”.<sup>418</sup> For Burke, an object is not defined in naked isolation from all relations, obtained through metaphysical abstraction, but through its circumstances an object obtains its colour. And from this background, comes Burke’s defence of superstition. Old prejudices should be cherished because they embody the wisdom of the ages. Furthermore, prejudices remove too much scepticism and this way make decisive action possible: “Prejudice renders a man’s virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature”.<sup>419</sup>

The attachment to conventions, even when they are seen as prejudices or as unfounded, is typical of modern English thought. David Hume’s famous stance towards his scepticism regarding the existence of the external world was that he forgot about it in the company of his friends. Whereas doubts about the constitution of the world and social conventions led to radical responses in France and Germany, the English mind had less problems with tolerating them or keeping them to oneself. It permeates the work of Burke and Hume as well as later writers like Walter Bagehot and Lewis Carroll. Moreover, the attachment to conventions and the joy in exposing their inconsistencies is typical of English humour and can be seen in shows like Monty Python.

In this sense, we can apply a concept to England that Nietzsche used for the ancient Greeks, *Oberflächlich aus Tiefe* (“superficial from depth”).<sup>420</sup> For Nietzsche, the Greek joy of living was a way to make bearable a deeper tragic understanding of existence. In a similar manner

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<sup>417</sup> Many people would not, like John Pocock, place Edmund Burke in the Enlightenment, because of his critique of the French Revolution. However, it has to be noted that he did not criticize modern Enlightenment thought as a whole and when he criticized the French Revolution, it was often from pluralist and liberal concerns. Furthermore, enlightened contemporaries like Edward Gibbon were great admirers of Burke. A figure strongly comparable to Burke is Thomas Malthus. His economic arguments parallel Burke’s political arguments. Malthus was not opposed to the rational pursuit of progress of revolutionary thinkers. However, he did criticize the unpractical nature of utopian thought and instead proposed more piecemeal improvements. (T.R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*)

<sup>418</sup> Edmund Burke, as quoted in: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 82

<sup>419</sup> E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003 (1775), pp. 74-75

<sup>420</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Nietzsche contra Wagner: Aktenstücke eines Psychologen’ (1895), in: *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, p. 439

we can say that the English indifference to inconsistency or lack of foundation has a deep meaning and relevance in the practical efficacy it makes possible.

## *France*

Whereas modern English thinkers were characterized by their practical bent and often even direct involvement in public affairs, in France, the world of high culture and that of business and state affairs were strongly separated. In France then, principle was favoured over practice. Both in method as well as in content, French Enlightenment thought is characterized by a high degree of abstraction. In the words of Tocqueville when he contrasts the role of intellectuals in both countries:

“In England writers on the theory of government and those who actually governed cooperated with each other, the former setting forth their new theories, the latter amending or circumscribing these in the light of practical experience. In France however, precept and practices were kept quite distinct and remained in the hands of two quite independent groups. One of these carried the actual administration while the other set forth the abstract principles on which government should, they said, be based;...”<sup>421</sup>

Being separated from practical power, French thinkers were free for imaginative thinking. According to Norman Hampson “writers accustomed to a salon audience were more inclined towards the exchange of brilliant ideas than to the sustained examination of their implications”<sup>422</sup>. And whereas, as we shall see, thinkers in the United States were even more practical than their counterparts in England, having as their most typical document *The Federalist Papers*, the typical document of the French Enlightenment was the *Encyclopedie*, a vast collection of all the world’s knowledge, edited by Diderot and d’Alembert. In content too, it was under the general banner of Reason rather than specific practical ends, for which this Cartesian work was written.<sup>423</sup>

We can see something similar with regard to the solutions found for the mentioned problem of self-interest, in the thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Political decisions should be made in accordance with the general will (*volonte generale*), a concept that thinkers like Robespierre

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<sup>421</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, as quoted in: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 149

<sup>422</sup> N. Hampson, ‘The Enlightenment in France’, in: R. Porter and M. Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1981), p. 44

<sup>423</sup> “Reason is to the *philosophe* what grace is to the Christian”, it reads in the *Encyclopédie*. (*Encyclopédie*, as quoted in: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 152)

and Sieyes shared, but which was absent from English thought. This general will has to be distinguished from the will of all (*volonte de tous*). The general will is singular and is a transcendent metaphysical entity that exists separate from the wills of particular individuals. In other words, it is something more than the sum of its parts. This contrasts strongly with English thought. We saw that Burke located civil freedom precisely in local circumstance and sought to keep it far from the realm of metaphysical abstraction. Furthermore, the general good in utilitarianism is nothing but the aggregated sum of individual preferences, which Rousseau dismissed as the will of all. From Rousseau to Diderot, and Condorcet, French thought tended to focus on a generalized conception of the virtues, and focus on the whole of mankind and feelings towards the species as a whole rather than on the individual and his direct surroundings. And when they wrote on liberty, like for instance in the article on it in the *Encyclopedie*, it was in the abstract rather than engaging in a systematic analysis of the institutional context that creates and protects it. The great exception to this pattern was Montesquieu. Not only was he more attuned to institutional contexts, he had less of a penchant for abstract principles and rejected a one-sided focus on reason. As we mentioned above, Montesquieu's thought however, had a greater influence in the United States than in France.<sup>424</sup> Other French thinkers criticized him precisely for the lack of universal principles.<sup>425</sup>

The focus on reason and general principles made the French Enlightenment revolutionary. In contrast with England, where modern thought coexisted with religion, French thought followed Voltaire's *écrasez l'Infame*, and brought it into practice in the revolution of 1789. Rousseau called for the state to make children patriotic against the particularism of families and in the *Encyclopedie* in the article on the Legislator, his task is to attach "the people to the country, of inspiring them with community spirit, humanity, benevolence, public virtues, private virtues, love of honesty, passions useful to the state, and finally of giving them and of conserving for them the kind of character, of genius that is suitable to the country".<sup>426</sup> And for Sieyes, "the nation is prior to everything. It is the source of everything".<sup>427</sup> Robespierre's revolutionary regime was based on Rousseauian ideas, with its cult of the Supreme Being and

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<sup>424</sup> There is another sense in which we could characterize Montesquieu as more typical of French thought and this concerns his reception. To a great extent Montesquieu and Burke had a similar approach and believed in similar principles. Both gave great attention to local culture, manners, religion and other circumstances in understanding a polity. Moreover, both did not believe reason to be sufficient to govern life. Having similar views on these accounts, both thinkers have been received differently. As Burke was a practical politician in England and was attached to its system, he is today considered a conservative thinker. Montesquieu however, was like a typical French thinker removed from the vestiges of power and he rejected the system of his country and this is why today he is viewed as a reformer.

<sup>425</sup> For an interpretation of how Montaigne also represented an exception to the line of thinking starting with Descartes, see: S. Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992 (1990), pp. 36-44

<sup>426</sup> *Encyclopédie*, as quoted in: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 176

<sup>427</sup> E.J. Sieyès, *What Is the Third Estate?*, p. 124

the emphasis on the people together with the rejection of individuals. Tocqueville was also clear on the character of the French Revolution: “The ideal the French Revolution set before it was not merely a change in the French social system but nothing short of a regeneration of the whole human race.”<sup>428</sup> There was considerable variation on this account. Whereas Rousseau’s successors like Robespierre, Sieyes and Saint-Just followed the revolutionary line, thinkers like Turgot, Lavoisier and Condorcet were more moderate and were more at peace with the old regime.<sup>429</sup> The long-term development in the stages of human evolution that Condorcet described, however, was no less revolutionary than the work of his contemporaries.<sup>430</sup>

Yet, although French Enlightenment thought was revolutionary, it did not lead to the concept of representative democracy or another form of pluralism. As we mentioned, the people was not conceptualized as a collection of diverse wills, but instead seen as a metaphysical entity that was unitary. Whereas Jean Bodin placed absolute sovereignty in the monarchy<sup>431</sup>, later thinkers made the people or the nation the absolute sovereign, as the quote above from Sieyes shows. French thought favoured centralization. For certain thinkers, an enlightened despot could be the means through which their revolutionary programs could be implemented. Voltaire was for a long time very close with Prussia’s Frederick the Great, Diderot sought to advance the rule of reason by advising Catherine the Great of Russia and Holbach dedicated one of his books to Louis XIV. The focus on centralized power and absolute sovereignty in French thought is the mirror image of what we will see in the case of the United States. The absolute authority of science was modelled on the field of politics. Mercier wrote: “Euclid is the true type of despot. The geometrical axioms which he has transmitted to us are genuine despotic laws; in them the legal and the personal despotism of the legislator are one and the same thing, a force evident and irresistible; and for that reason the despot Euclid has for centuries exercised his unchallenged sway over all enlightened peoples.”<sup>432</sup> Furthermore, several French philosophers like D’Alembert and Condorcet were gifted mathematicians. These thinkers and people like Voltaire did not aspire a pluralist system like that developed in England, but sought to replace the centralization of the old regime with a science-based central regime. In these features we encounter structural resemblances with the fields of education and political economy. Furthermore, French modern thought developed the character of the technocratic elite. Descartes already rejected the pluralist empirical gathering of information in favour of a singular architecture of knowledge. Voltaire’s elitist is clear

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<sup>428</sup> In the original French it reads: (...) elle avait l’air de tender à la régénération du genre humain plus encore qu’à la réforme de la France (...), A. de Tocqueville, *L’Ancien Régime*, Charleston: BiblioLife, 2010, p. 22

<sup>429</sup> N. Hampson, ‘The Enlightenment in France’, p. 49

<sup>430</sup> N. de Condorcet, *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind*, Chicago: G. Langer, 2009

<sup>431</sup> J. Bodin, ‘Book I’, in: *On Sovereignty: Four chapters from The Six Books of the Commonwealth*, J.H. Franklin (ed.), Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo and Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2008 (1576), pp. 1-88

<sup>432</sup> Mercier de la Rivière, as quoted by: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 166

from his famous remark that if God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him, so that the *canaille* would behave better.<sup>433</sup> And from Mercer to Diderot, Condorcet, Saint-Simon and Comte, enlightened monarchs and/or technocratic elites were supposed to rule society rationally.

### *The United States*

Whereas in contrast with France, English modern thought was more practically oriented, this was to an even greater extent the case in the United States. Speculation and other theoretical activity is subordinated to practical use in American society, as Turner argues: “Art, literature, refinement, scientific administration, all had to give way to this Titanic labor. Energy, incessant activity, became the lot of this new American. Says a traveller of the time of Andrew Jackson, “America is like a vast workshop, over the door of which is printed in blazing characters, ‘No admittance here, except on business’”.”<sup>434</sup> And according to Turner, the influence of the Western frontier creates “working politicians” rather than “talking politicians”. Practical demands go against the creation of “metaphysicians in policy”.<sup>435</sup> This anti-metaphysical bent thus contrasts starkly with the ideal of the technocratic elite in France.

More specifically, not only politicians, but also thinkers had a strong practical orientation in America. In England we saw that this was connected to the great access to public affairs and the relations that thinkers had with the world of practice. In America, the great thinkers often were the men of action themselves. They were not sceptical of power like their counterparts in France, as there was no system of institutionalized privilege or some other feudal legacy in America. J.R. Pole states “the men of leisure, who enjoyed the use of libraries and the possibilities of correspondence with learned contemporaries both in America and in Europe, were in many cases themselves the great men of their communities”.<sup>436</sup> Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Rush and George Washington were leading thinkers as well as prominent politicians in America.

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<sup>433</sup> Against this character of the technocratic elite, we also see in French thought the counter-character of the anarcho-syndicalist in figures like Rousseau and Proudhon. And in similarly centralized Russia, Bakunin answered Voltaire’s maxim with the remark that if God did exist, it would be necessary to abolish him. (M. Bakunin, *God and the State*, New York: Dover Publications, 1970 (1882))

<sup>434</sup> F. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, p. 211

<sup>435</sup> Idem, p. 31

<sup>436</sup> J.R. Pole, ‘Enlightenment and the Politics of American Nature’, in: R. Porter and M. Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1981), p. 199

Like their English counterparts, the practical orientation of these thinkers led them to focus on and explore the social and moral virtues. Like English thinkers, Jefferson for instance believed that not only was man by nature social but that there is an innate moral sense that is inherent in man's sentiments. However, American thinkers had an extra concern that was crucial in their situation. In contrast with England, America was a new society and especially since the American Revolution, it had to develop its own political order. The moral virtues were required for the realization of the public good, but in America more was needed as a *novus ordo saeculorum* was created. The central concern of American thinkers was the political foundation for liberty. As John Adams stressed, it was from their original town halls and assemblies that Americans from their early origins on acquired the habit of discussing, deliberating and judging of political affairs.<sup>437</sup>

Just as the *Encyclopedie* was the typical document of the French Enlightenment, the *Federalist Papers*, written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay was the typical document of the American Enlightenment, which was concerned with the practical issue of establishing freedom in a new polity. In contrast with English thought, these authors were aware of the very modern character of their undertaking and the way it represented a break with the past. In the first paper, they speak of the creation of good government through reflection and choice.<sup>438</sup> In this sense, American thought resembled French thought with the focus on reason, revolution and starting politics anew. Thomas Paine stated "we have it in our power to begin the world over again" and "seeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time".<sup>439</sup> And Benjamin Rush wanted an educational system that would turn men into "republican machines".<sup>440</sup> However, their approach did differ from that of their French counterparts. For Madison for instance, reason alone was timid and cautious and also required the opinion of others as well as prejudices for action, themes we also saw in the more moderate thought of England. And whereas the *Federalist Papers* wanted to create good government through reflection and choice, reason was much less exalted than in France and they were sceptical of the possibilities. The authors leave the question open on whether it is possible or whether people "are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force".<sup>441</sup>

Linked to this sceptical attitude concerning on the autonomous reason is also the more positive attitude towards religion. Like England and in contrast with France, religion and reason or modern freedom did not come into deep conflict. As Tocqueville observed: "Among us [the French] I had seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom almost always move in contrary directions. Here [in America] I found them united intimately with one another:

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<sup>437</sup> H. Arendt, *On Revolution*, London: Penguin Books, 1990 (1963), pp. 141-214

<sup>438</sup> J. Madison, A. Hamilton and J. Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, London: Penguin Books, 1987 (1788), p. 87

<sup>439</sup> Thomas Paine, as quoted in: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 192

<sup>440</sup> J.R. Pole, 'Enlightenment and the Politics of American Nature', p. 204

<sup>441</sup> J. Madison, A. Hamilton and J. Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, p. 87

they reigned together on the same soil”.<sup>442</sup> In fact, the millennialism in American religion of Winthrop’s “city on a hill” strongly resembled and reinforced the revolutionary character of American republican politics. Furthermore, prominent American religious leaders like Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, Ezra Stiles and John Witherspoon were also men of science.

If we turn to the issue of the problem of the modern pursuit of self-interest, we also see specific American solutions to this problem. The Anti-Federalists were highly sceptical of modern society and they opposed great powers of the federal state because they believed that virtue could not survive in a large commercial and industrial state. Only in small, agrarian communities could virtue be maintained. However, the Federalists sought to counter the problem of modern society with modern means. The pursuit of self-interest was to be countered by the pursuit of self-interest of others. The system of checks and balances and the separation of powers were devised to counter too strong individualism. Freedom is to be guaranteed by institutionalizing opposition: “This policy of supplying, by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced through the whole system of human affairs, private as well as public”. And by design, “ambition must be made to counteract ambition”.<sup>443</sup> According to Pole, it was a commonplace to compare the American Constitution to the Newtonian cosmic order. The elements went their own direction through their natural propensities, but they were kept in place by the countervailing powers of others. The gravitational power of the federal state kept the individual states in their orbits.<sup>444</sup> And the other way around, the reforms of Jefferson were animated by a desire to block the centralizing power of the federal state. In contrast with European countries, reform in America was not association with central power. It was the political philosophy of a political economy that can be described as competitive capitalism and the character of the expansive individual.

Whereas modern French thought developed the idea of absolute sovereignty in the state (either monarchical or republican), thought in America sought to disperse power. The people remained sovereign so that in America no single person or institution could concentrate sovereign power. Just like in English thought there was a focus on spontaneous association over centralized power, but in America this focus was even stronger. Whereas Adam Smith spoke highly of the importance of the state to guarantee freedom, Thomas Paine’s judgment was much more harsh: “Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher. Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil in its worst state an intolerable one”.<sup>445</sup> This distinction between England and America ties in with what we earlier described

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<sup>442</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, as quoted in: G. Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity*, p. 205

<sup>443</sup> J. Madison, A. Hamilton, J. Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, pp. 319-320

<sup>444</sup> J.R. Pole, ‘Enlightenment and the Politics of American Nature’, p. 195

<sup>445</sup> T. Paine, ‘Common sense: addressed to the inhabitants of America’ (1776), in: D. Williams (ed.), *The Enlightenment*, Cambridge, New York and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 472

as a subject culture versus a participant culture in the work of Verba and Almond and the reverence versus the dissidence that Burke described in the religion of both countries.

### *Germany*

We mentioned above that views on modern thought and the Enlightenment are strongly biased with French assumptions. Germany too, joins the other countries in distinction with France in the more peaceful coexistence of modern thought with the world of religion. Modern German thought, like that of Immanuel Kant, did reform religion and place it within rational boundaries, but it would be later, like in the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, that philosophy would radically collide with religion.

Another theme that separates modern German thought from that of France is the idea of the embedding of individuals in a community. Johan Gottfried Herder for instance, who is often seen as an early romantic, but who according to Louis Dumont should be placed in the Enlightenment, wrote a text called *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte* (“Another philosophy of history”) in 1774 that was a polemic with Voltaire. In it, he argues against the conception of man as an abstract individual, a representative of the species, in favour of man as inherently belonging to a cultural community. This way placing individuals in a community is what Dumont calls a holism, which is typical of pre-modern society, within modernity.<sup>446</sup>

The focus on the belonging of the individual to a community ties in with how Ernst Troeltsch defined the German idea of freedom. It is “an organized unity of the people based on a rigorous and at the same time critical devotion of the individual to the whole, which is completed and legitimized by the independence and individuality of the free spiritual culture [Bildung]”.<sup>447</sup> In this concept of freedom we recognize the character of the loyal civil servant. Whereas English thinkers placed freedom in the utilitarian pursuit of desires, Kant placed freedom in the dutiful struggle against inclination (*Neigung*).

There was thus in Germany a strong consistency between religious thought and that of enlightened thinkers. The combination of a sovereign private life with a self-sacrificing public life is present in Luther’s earlier mentioned description of the Christian as well as in the practical philosophy of Immanuel Kant and the ideas of Von Humboldt that he implemented

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<sup>446</sup> L. Dumont, *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992 (1986), pp. 116-117

<sup>447</sup> Ernst Troeltsch, as quoted in: *ibidem*, p. 133



in the education system.<sup>448</sup> Overall, eighteenth-century German thinkers like Kant, Jacobi, Fichte, Von Humboldt and Schiller shared this Protestant background.<sup>449</sup>

Furthermore, the perfectionist strand in Pietism proved to be consistent with enlightened thought and the reforms pursued by both movements were often the same.<sup>450</sup> Christian submission was transformed by the spirit of Enlightenment and placed under the patriarchal-absolutist state, secularizing the religious spirit of duty. Similarly, according to Thomas Mann, there was a natural transition from Lutheranism through Pietism to Enlightenment thought.<sup>451</sup>

From these elements we also come to the specific German solutions to the universal problem of the modern pursuit of self-interest. In England, the invisible hand and the innate moral sense countered self-interest within the modern market place, whereas in America a solution was found in a system of checks and balances through which ambition counteracted ambition, and in France an abstract unity of wills was proposed under a sovereign power. In German thought the solution was found by on the one hand placing a community spirit in the market place and on the other hand by adherence to a state that guaranteed the public good. In Ernst Troeltsch' idea of German freedom a spirit of community permeated the modern economy: "The thought of organic liberty poured out into a harmonious and graduated cooperation of enterprises great and small, state-run or private" thanks to "the disciplined sense of the whole and the sentiment of honor in participating in the whole"<sup>452</sup>. We find the same motive in the post-Enlightenment thought of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Central in his philosophy is the concept of recognition (*Anerkennung*). Francis Fukuyama also took on this concept in his description of universal modernization, but he translated it to Anglo-Saxon assumptions and tied it to the recognition of individual liberties in a democratic polity. Hegel himself conceptualized recognition in a more concrete way through for instance the organization of the economy. He distinguished three estates in the economy, of the peasants, state officials and of trade and industry. Whereas the former two already have a natural relationship to the public good, the latter requires an organization in corporations.<sup>453</sup> The corporation should see to the interests of its members, take on members on the basis of capability and character, protect them against incidental adversity and nurture their skills. This way a community spirit

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<sup>448</sup> S. Ozment, *A Mighty Fortress*, p. 152

<sup>449</sup> W. Dilthey, 'Friedrich der Grosse und die deutsche Aufklärung', in: *Gesammelte Schriften: III. Band: Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Geistes: Leibniz und sein Zeitalter, Friedrich der Grosse und die deutsche Aufklärung, Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert und die geschichtliche Welt*, K. Gründer and F. Rodi (eds), Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992 (1959), p. 144

<sup>450</sup> S. Ozment, *A Mighty Fortress*, p. 130

<sup>451</sup> L. Dumont, *Essays on Individualism*, pp. 135-141

<sup>452</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 134

<sup>453</sup> Hegel calls this the honor of the estate (*Standesehre*). (G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (*Werke* 7), Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986 (1821), pp. 393-398)

is infused into trade and industry and he characterizes the corporation as “the second family”. The corporation counteracts the pursuit of self-interest: “Ohne Mitglied einer berechtigten Korporation zu sein ( und nur als berechtigt ist ein Gemeinsames eine Korporation), ist der Einzelne ohne *Standesehre*, durch seine Isolierung auf die selbstsuchtige Seite des Gewerbes reduziert, seine Subsistenz und Genuss nichts *Stehendes*”.<sup>454</sup> Although the estates are an archaic concept, Troeltsch’s description and Hegel’s idea of corporations parallels what we saw in the section on the German political economy, which we characterized as cooperative capitalism.

Next to the infusion of community spirit in the market place, modern German thought turned to the state to counteract the pursuit of self-interest. It can be seen from the answers given to the famous question “What is Enlightenment?” posed by Pastor Zoellner in 1783 in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*. The most influential answer was given by Kant. It is important to note that for him Enlightenment meant freedom in a moral and intellectual sense, but not in a political sense. In private people were free, but in political they owed obedience to the state.<sup>455</sup> Another answer came from Moses Mendelssohn who defined Enlightenment in terms of a theoretical education of man. He also realized that this education could collide with the education of good citizens. The abuse of *Aufklärung* could according to Mendelssohn lead to stubbornness, egotism, irreligion and anarchy. And according to Whaley the majority view was also a positive answer to another question posed by Villaume in 1785 of “whether and in what manner the education of the individual should sacrifice his perfection to his social utility?”<sup>456</sup>. In modern German thought the state was thus another counterforce against excessive individualism.

### *The Netherlands*

Like in England, modern thought in the Netherlands was nurtured and marked by great pluralism. And just like England, we have to distinguish between the Enlightenment in the

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<sup>454</sup> Idem, p. 395

<sup>455</sup> Thomas Mann said the following on the inward freedom of Germans: “The finest characteristic of the typical German, the best-known and also the most flattering to his self-esteem, is his inwardness. It is no accident that it was the Germans who gave to the world the intellectually stimulating and very humane literary form which we call the novel of personal cultivation and development. Western Europe has its novel of social criticism to which the German regard this other type as their own special counterpart; it is at the same time an autobiography, a confession.” (Quoted from: L. Dumont, *Essays on Individualism*, p.138)

<sup>456</sup> J. Whaley, ‘The Protestant Enlightenment in Germany’, in: R. Porter and M. Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1981), pp. 107-109

country, which in both cases was very moderate, and the way foreign thinkers viewed the constitution of the country as enlightened. For many thinkers, the Netherlands were the land of freedom. Voltaire for instance wrote of the country:

O Liberte, si chere a l'Univers

O Liberte, qu'un pouvoir despotique

Loin de ces lieux fait languir dans les fers

Regne a jamais dans cette Republique

Cher a mes amis et meme dans ces vers<sup>457</sup>

Indeed, the great amount of freedom that authors enjoyed in the Low Countries attracted many influential thinkers from abroad. René Descartes and Pierre Bayle are prominent examples of this and Baruch de Spinoza, born in Amsterdam, was the son of Jewish émigrés from Portugal.

Although this was before the Age of Enlightenment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, these thinkers made important contributions, which Jonathan Israel has called the “radical Enlightenment”. Emanating from Spinoza’s work, but also the study of Cartesianism at Leiden University in a time when it was banned in much of the rest of Europe, central theoretical steps were taken towards the world view of the later Enlightenment.<sup>458</sup> According to Israel, the later work of La Mettrie, Diderot and Voltaire was the culmination of a process that started with these earlier thinkers.

This radicalism in metaphysics notwithstanding, Dutch modern thought did not develop the radical social critique that became dominant in France. Not having the oppressive institutions that other countries had, Dutch thought sought piecemeal reform and was very practical in nature. The influential early modern thought of Desiderius Erasmus for instance did not come into great conflict with religion, and instead he sought to reform Christianity from within by emphasizing individual responsibility and moral behaviour over theoretical issues.<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> Voltaire, as quoted in: S. Schama, ‘The Enlightenment in the Netherlands’, in: R. Porter and M. Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1981), p. 57

<sup>458</sup> J.I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002 (2001), pp. 1-22 and 159-174

<sup>459</sup> Led by Petrus Burman, there was a group of thinkers that modeled themselves on the French *philosophes*. However, even their motto was ‘Vrijheid, Vroomheid, Vrede en Verdrag’ (‘freedom, piety, peace and toleration’). (S. Schama, ‘The Enlightenment in the Netherlands’, pp. 66-67)

Individual freedom and entrepreneurial spirit was central in Dutch modern thought. Hugo Grotius was the first to develop the modern version of the social contract, in which society is based on the free consent of individuals.<sup>460</sup> On a macro-level too, he defended international law as the basis of interaction between nations and he defended liberal free trade and declared the seas free for all. We encountered Bernard Mandeville, who was born in Rotterdam, but moved to England, who also emphasized individual freedom as the basis of the public good in our discussion of English thought. Other thinkers also attached to the individual, but focused more on individual responsibilities and discipline. The neo-Stoicism of Lipsius was strongly oriented towards practical life over speculation and in it we see the Dutch character of the stern burgher.<sup>461</sup>

The strong practical bent can also be seen from the scientific work of people like Boerhaave and Van Leeuwenhoek who contributed to clinical and biological research. A certain 'encyclopædism' can be found in the collecting work that was done in fields like botany as well as oriental studies, which was linked to Dutch international enterprise. However, this was empirical in nature and did not lead to a rationalist reconstruction of the world, like the encyclopædism of France.<sup>462</sup>

Next to the orientation on international intellectual debates, we also need to distinguish a more locally oriented strain in modern Dutch thought. One part of this focused on the more secular line of the Dutch people. The cult of the ancient Batavians was an important example of this. Comparable to German thought, the concern here was the embedding of the individual in a moral community. But whereas Herder in Germany emphasized his country as the *terra obedientiae*, the Batavians were invoked for their fierce individualistic spirit.<sup>463</sup> Thinkers could also be engaged with both modern liberal thought as well as this moral community. Next to his already mentioned work, Hugo Grotius also worked on the Batavian myth. Next to the more secular version, there was also a focus on the local community from a religious orientation. There developed a genre of moral and political discourse of the Dutch as the reborn and resworn Hebrews, who were protected by Providence as long as they remained faithful to the Ark of the Covenant. In the words of Simon Schama, (...) "by the 1780s, it must be plain, the condition for bringing about that amorphously defined act of collective renewal prescribed by the vernacular Enlightenment in the Netherlands was the rejection of a cosmopolitan, Francophone, universally applicable, rationally discerned set of natural laws, in favour of a highly particular, inward-looking, evangelical, proto-romantic cult of the Fatherland"<sup>464</sup>. In the combination of strong individualism with a focus on the local

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<sup>460</sup> C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989, p. 82

<sup>461</sup> Idem, pp. 159-160

<sup>462</sup> S. Schama, 'The Enlightenment in the Netherlands', p. 68

<sup>463</sup> S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 54

<sup>464</sup> S. Schama, 'The Enlightenment in the Netherlands', p. 71

community we see a mirror image of what we defined in the field of political economy as Dutch liberal corporatist capitalism. Perhaps its clearest theoretical expression was in the work of the early modern thinker Johannes Althusius, a Calvinist author from the East Frisian town of Emden, whose work was linked to the Dutch Revolt. He describes politics as “the art of association” (*consociandi*) in which people pledge themselves to each other in ever wider spheres.<sup>465</sup> For Althusius, power does not descend from a central authority, but is created in an ascending manner from the family, the collegium (which includes guilds, corporations and other voluntary associations), the city, and the province, up to a political and ecclesiastic community.



*Rembrandt's De Staalmeesters ('the masters of samples') in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. Depicting the stern burghers, the light that Rembrandt put around the book of their measurements, expresses the practical nature of Dutch "Enlightenment"*

### *Modern Thought & the Process of Modernization*

In the course of our discussion of modern thought, particularly Enlightenment thought, in the five countries we have seen distinctions between the countries that parallel the distinctions we

<sup>465</sup> J. Althusius, *Politica: an abridged translation of: Politics methodically set forth, and illustrated with sacred and profane examples*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1995 (1603), p. 17 ff.

made when we looked at the fields of education and political economy. In the next table we depict some of these patterns. The first column depicts the main concern of modern thinkers. Here we characterize in what way different accents and points of focus existed in the countries we looked at. Secondly, we look at the type of thinker. We saw that whereas in some country, modern thinkers were close to the world of policy and popular opinion, in other countries they typically were oppositionist figures. Thirdly, we saw that countering the negative influences of the modern pursuit of self-interest was a universal topic in Enlightenment thought. The third column represents the specific solutions that were thought of in the five countries. Columns four and five repeat the style and character we attributed to the countries above. They show the resemblances across the fields we looked at. The English educated gentleman and the competitive style corresponds to a belief in innate social virtues and the way spontaneous association leads to the public good. Just like the country's political economy, the French *philosophes* had a penchant for dirigisme. Their grand schemes of rational society was to be implemented by a sovereign who represents the metaphysical unity of the country. Table 4 depicts the overall patterns.

**Table 4: Modern Thought**

	<b>Main Concern</b>	<b>Type of Thinkers</b>	<b>Solution to Self-Interest</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Character</b>
<b>Germany</b>	Concrete Community	State Officials	Community in Economy & State Responsibility	Concerted Action	Loyal Civil Servant
<b>France</b>	Reign of Reason	Outsiders and Planners	Unity under Sovereign	Dirigisme	Technocrat
<b>England</b>	Social Virtues	Close to World of Action	Spontaneous Association	Competition	Gentleman
<b>United States</b>	Political Liberty	Leading politicians	Ambition vs. Ambition	Competition	Expansive Individual
<b>Netherlands</b>	Individual Responsibility	Émigrés, Men of Action	Individualism in Small Communities	Restrained Competition	Stern Burgher

## **E). The Paths of Modernization in the West**

In the course of this chapter we have looked at different paths of modernization in five Western countries. First, we more generally distinguished them into Continental and Anglo-Saxon countries. Then we looked at them individually in the fields of education, political economy and modern thought. Within these fields we saw differences between the countries that correspond to similar differences in the other fields. Through our concepts of critical shaping moments, characters or cultural types, structural resemblances and style, we have sought to shed light on the overall patterns we discerned. In this final section of chapter III, we will focus more directly on these overall patterns and the unity across fields in the process of the modernization of a society.

In the preceding, we have already encountered direct links between the different fields. For instance, we saw how the institutions of education impact the political economy of a country. In France, the modern institutions of education were developed with the goal of creating a technical elite. These institutions in turn support a certain expertise and prestige in the country's bureaucracy, which make it possible for it to perform a role in the political economic organization of the country. The other way around, we saw that the weakness of protection in American labour markets creates disincentives to students to learn company- and industry-specific skills. This contributes to the focus in American education on general skills.

It is not our goal here to prioritize any of the fields we discussed, let alone to reduce the patterns to a single field. Not only would this require extensive historical research that moves far beyond the scope of this investigation, it is also a rash theoretical commitment that has encountered much critique in historical analysis. Although we looked at patterns in modern thought, we will thus not commit ourselves to a belief that ideas determine history and although we studied patterns in political economy, we will also not follow a materialist interpretation of the paths of modernization. It has been our goal in this investigation to bring to light that there are general patterns in these diverse fields of social reality.

The idea that there are general patterns across different fields can be elucidated by a concept in the social science literature. We can broaden the concept of 'institutional complementarities' to shed light on the patterns we have seen. In economics, so-called complementary goods have been distinguished. These are goods that are linked in the market like bread and butter. An increase in the price of one leads to a decrease in the demand for the other. This concept of complementary goods has been extended to the field of political economy, where authors speak of institutional complementarities. Two institutions are complementary if the presence (or efficiency) of the one increases the returns from (or

efficiency of) the other.<sup>466</sup> These authors focus for instance on the complimentary character of the institutions of financial markets and those of labour markets. We can apply the term here even broader beyond only the field of political economy. The institutional arrangements in the field of education can be linked to and reinforce the capacity of a certain type of political economy. The patterns in one field ‘cluster’ with those in another field and they mutually reinforce each other. The German system of cooperative capitalism contributes to an educational system that emphasizes equality as well as a strong skills base. And the ideology of reason in France gives legitimacy and credibility to a dirigist political economy, just as the focus on individual liberty in American thought underpins the country’s fierce competition. Across fields these patterns create certain equilibriums, which change over time, but which do show consistency. This is why we have been able to show the pervasiveness of certain patterns through time. Their complementary character makes it hard to take on the features of another country in a certain field. Lacking the complementary forces in other fields, such attempts will often not achieve the planned results or local forces will shape the new structures in a way that is different from its country of origin.

Apart from this concept of complementarities across spheres, there is more that we can say about the unity of the patterns we have described, but at which we can only hint here. In looking at how certain patterns are transmitted across sphere in a society and trying to understand how this emerges we have to take note of the formative force of *family* life. As the first place of socialization, an individual’s character and behaviour are critically shaped within the family, as psychologists have shown. Furthermore, in the family patterns are formed that are later transmitted to the school and then to the work place, this way impacting the cultural peculiarities of a society.<sup>467</sup> This concerns aspects like authority relations ( or what Hofstede calls power distance), but also ideals of masculinity and femininity as well as the type of orientation to uncertainty. Certain studies have emphasized how in family life the character of a culture is transmitted. In chapter II we discussed Kakar’s study of how the ambiguity in Indian upbringing shapes the larger cultural horizon of Hinduism. Across Asia, Lucian Pye has hinted at how family relations differ. Whereas in Indian upbringing, the mother-son relationship dominates and the father is distant, in China the father-son relationship is central and in Islamic culture the relationship of brotherhood is emphasized.<sup>468</sup>

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<sup>466</sup> M. Aoki, *Corporations in Evolving Diversity: Cognition, Governance, and Institutions*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University, 2010, pp. 71-94; and P.A. Hall and D. Soskice, ‘An Introduction to Varieties of Capitalism’, pp. 17-18

<sup>467</sup> For instance, in his investigation of cultural differences, Geert Hofstede describes this pattern. (G. Hofstede, *Culture’s Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations (Second Edition)*, Thousand Oaks, London and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001)

<sup>468</sup> L.W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimension*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985



Within the West too, we can see how the specific features of societies that we distinguished can be traced to and are transmitted by the character of family life. In his large quantitative investigation, Geert Hofstede has analyzed cultural patterns in developed countries along several dimensions and linked this to family life. Along the dimension of power distance, high score is in the family associated with an emphasis on respect and relations are warm, but paternalistic. In countries with a low score on power distance, children are engaged more and early on as equals. France, which was characterized by centralization and dirigisme also falls in the pattern of high power distance.<sup>469</sup> On the dimension of uncertainty avoidance a high score implies in the family the existence of strict unambiguous rules, whereas a low score means a more positive attitude to experimentation by children to find out things themselves.<sup>470</sup> On this dimension, as well as the dimension measuring the extent of individualism, the Anglo-Saxon countries cluster together as low in uncertainty avoidance and high in individualism.<sup>471</sup> In England, we could link this emphasis on individualism and tolerating uncertainty to the role of the boarding schools in the upbringing. Being taken out of the family to then compete and cooperate with peers transmits the character of the gentleman and his competitive spirit. And in the United States, we can see how the competitive expansive individual is shaped in American upbringing. Ideas of finding oneself and leaving home are constitutive of childhood in the United States: "Separation and individuation are issues that must be faced by all human beings, but leaving home in its American sense is not. (...) In traditional Japan, the expression "leaving home" was reserved for those entering monastic life, who abandoned all ties of ordinary existence. For us, leaving home is the normal expectation, and childhood is in many ways a preparation for it."<sup>472</sup>

From these different examples we can see how in the family cultural features are transmitted across generations. And from what is implanted in individuals in the upbringing, the habits, character and behaviour emerges that manifests itself in different fields of social reality that we have analyzed.

We now have two suggestions that help us understand the consistency of patterns across fields in a society. Traits are transmitted through the generations in the family where modes of behaviour and character traits are formed that manifest themselves in different fields of social reality. Secondly, the complementary character of institutions and ideas in these different fields mutually reinforce each other so that they cluster together.

What we now want to do is delve deeper into the origins of the specific traditions in the societies we looked at. In our discussion we already encountered the prominent role of religion and we will return to this in a moment. First, we want to look at specific suggestions

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<sup>469</sup> G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, pp. 79-143

<sup>470</sup> G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, pp. 145-208

<sup>471</sup> G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, pp. 209-278

<sup>472</sup> R.N. Bellah *et al*, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2008 (1985), p. 57

that have been made by thinkers that can shed light on the particularities of the analyzed societies. Up to now, our discussion has leaned strongly on empirical investigations of the differences between Western societies. In the following, we will turn to more philosophical analysis. Specifically, we will look at those philosophers whose ideas complement the structures we have discerned so far. It is interesting to see how the ideas developed by philosophers like Hegel, Spengler and Schmitt are similar to the results of our empirical investigation thus far. As their ideas are complementary to what we have already discussed, their more broad philosophical suggestions can help us gain a deeper insight into the phenomena. Necessarily, this will also give the following investigation a more speculative character. Because of this, our approach will also be more eclectic. Going deeper ‘under the skin’ of the phenomena makes it harder to explain them unequivocally. What we seek to do is present several perspectives that all contribute to an understanding of the diversity of phenomena we have found.

In our discussion we will see the importance of geographical factors in shaping the traditions of societies. A focus on the sea or on the land and the specific character of the land are important factors in understanding cultural peculiarities. What has to be noted from the outset however, is that this in no way implies a geographical determinism. What we are looking at is the way geographical factors are taken up and interpreted by a people in their sense of reality. Geographical factors in themselves do not determine a specific type of culture. We will see how England’s orientation towards the sea and its island-character shaped its culture. However, Indonesia, Cuba and Madagascar also consist of islands and it is clear that this does not lead to a uniform type of culture. Furthermore, we will return to the theme of the role of the frontier in American culture. It was the way this feature of the geographical surrounding was taken up by the Americans that gave it its particular character, which it did not have for the native American Indians. It is thus the interpretation of geography that we will look at.

In our distinction between Anglo-Saxon and Continental societies we already briefly came across the impact of geography. Michel Albert was the one who coined the term ‘Rhineland’ society for the latter type. We can understand the geographical basis of the distinction better by looking at his discussion of the origins of one part of the financial sector, that of insurance.<sup>473</sup> The insurance sector arose first in the upper valleys of the Alps around the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The mutual benefit insurance groups were part of a group of community organizations that arose in this region like guilds, corporations and professional syndicates. The core feature of these organizations was the sharing of risk and this way they enforced solidarity in the community. From these origins arose the contemporary sector of the reinsurance industry, which is still centred around the Alpine region of Switzerland, Bavaria and Northeast Italy. Its main cities today are still Zurich, Munich and Trieste. This type of insurance is based on security and continuity. According to Albert, the other birthplace of modern insurance was the sea. Originally, this started in Italian cities like Venice and Genoa,

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<sup>473</sup> M. Albert, *Capitalism vs. Capitalism*, pp. 85-88

but then moved to London. This type of insurance was concerned with the cargo aboard marine enterprise. Rather than being concerned with solidarity and redistribution, this type of insurance was concerned with the management of individual risk and was much more speculative in character.<sup>474</sup> In the contemporary world, London and New York are the capitals of this type of insurance.

This discussion of the Alpine and maritime tradition in insurance points us in the direction of reinterpreting our distinction between Anglo-Saxon and Continental societies in terms of a distinction between sea-oriented and land-oriented societies, respectively. Philosopher Carl Schmitt has described the transition of power from Venice to the countries of North-Western Europe as a decisive shift in man's relationship to the element of water in these countries.<sup>475</sup> Of symbolical importance for the sea-oriented societies is the title of Hobbes' book the *Leviathan*, which was the Biblical sea creature depicted as a large whale or crocodile. The symbolical counterpart for the land-oriented societies is the Behemoth, often depicted as elephant or buffalo. Whereas the Behemoth conquers his enemies with his teeth, the Leviathan blocks his ability to breath and eat.<sup>476</sup> These two tactics are symbolical for the land wars and sea wars. A land war is a war between unified states, whose armies encounter each other in open battle fields. The sea war by contrast, resolves around trade and the eminent tactic is that of the blockade, effectively 'starving' the enemy.<sup>477</sup>

After the Iberian countries, it was Holland that took the lead as the oceanic power. According to Schmitt, the whale also had a literal meaning in the ascendance of this power. The lead in the hunt for whales, which in the pre-mechanical world was the most complex and heroic type of enterprise on the water, spurred Dutch pre-eminence. Later, Herman Melville would write *Moby Dick*, the grand epos of this Oceanic enterprise. It was through new sailing techniques and new types of ships, like the flute ship, that global trade was dominated by Holland.

Under the reign of Queen Elizabeth, England transformed itself into a sea power by beating the Spanish Armada and honouring sea heroes like Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh. In the course of its development, the island-character of England became culturally significant and

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<sup>474</sup> For a philosophical analysis of this maritime insurance see: P. Sloterdijk, *Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals: Für eine philosophische Theorie der Globalisierung*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005, pp. 80-86

<sup>475</sup> C. Schmitt, *Land und Meer: Eine weltgeschichtliche Betrachtung*, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2008 (1942). Schmitt here follows Ernst Kapp's three stages in man's relationship to the water. The first is 'potamic' and represents the river-based cultures of the East. (In chapter II we have mentioned Karl Wittfogel's study on how this type of geography has led to certain cultural features. The centralized management of the rivers led to a system of 'hydraulic' or Oriental despotism.) The second stage is 'thalassian' and represents the cultures of the inner sea of the Mediterranean, the ancient Greeks and Romans. The third stage is 'oceanic' and emerged with the countries of North-Western Europe. In this stage, according to Schmitt, people first truly became 'children of the water'.

<sup>476</sup> Idem, pp. 16-17

<sup>477</sup> As Sir Walter Raleigh said: "whoever commands the sea, commands the trade; whoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself".

led to a different relationship to the water, according to Schmitt. Increasingly, a new awareness arose. Before this development, the land was viewed as the territorial steady basis, of which the sea was, seen from the standpoint of the land, was the outer limit. The new type of awareness came to see the land from the sea. From the sea, land appears as a coastline, behind which is a 'hinterland'. The territorial basis of other countries becomes simply the hinterland from this sea-orientation and the word "continental" became in England literally synonymous with "backwardness"<sup>478</sup>. The new orientation viewed the world in terms of trade lines and choke points. And in this orientation the motherland itself becomes mobile, which was expressed in Disraeli's suggestion that the Queen of England should move her entire court to Delhi.

The land-based character of Continental societies thus sheds light on the features we have discussed of greater centralization, unity and state-involvement as well as a focus on solidarity and attachment to locality. A sea-like character on the other hand goes together with free trade, individualism, risk-taking and mobility from the land.

The perspective of land versus sea can also elucidate other elements that we discerned in the development of modern thought. A core theme in modern philosophical thought has been the basis of knowledge. Following Peter Sloterdijk, we can interpret literally the Continental idea, starting with Descartes, of finding first principles that are certain and that can provide a foundation for knowledge, as the quest for finding ground under our feet.<sup>479</sup> Continental philosophers from Descartes to Kant and Husserl suffered from 'hydrophobia' and have sought to find 'steady ground'. Sloterdijk contrasts this with the 'nautical spirit' in philosophy, which we above have encountered in the empiricism of Anglo-Saxon thought. This spirit requires no foundation, but only 'imports', 'storage places' and 'partners'<sup>480</sup>, the latter of which is philosophically expressed in the common sense tradition in Anglo-Saxon philosophy.

For Sloterdijk, whose focus is on the development of globalization and travel over the seas, the Continental spirit is "provincial" and "counterrevolutionary". From our perspective here, rather than seeing it as an anti-modern spirit, we can characterize it as belonging to an alternative modernity, that of the land, which is characterized by greater central organization, equality and solidarity than the nautical spirit.

Telling about this characterization of different styles of thinking is also the metaphor used by epistemologist Ernest Sosa on two theories of knowledge in his article *The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge*, which opens with the

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<sup>478</sup> Idem, p. 95

<sup>479</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals*, p. 139

<sup>480</sup> Idem, p. 141

line: “Contemporary epistemology must choose between the solid security of the ancient foundationalist pyramid and the risky adventure of the new coherentist raft.”<sup>481</sup>

Focusing on Anglo-Saxon countries, we can see the sea-orientation in their origins. Outside of England, the other Anglo-Saxon countries of the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand were created by migrations over the oceans, to a great extent by English migrants. Turning to the United States we can see strong cultural continuity with England. Not only were many of the original settlers originally from England, but David Hackett Fischer has extensively argued that the different character of regions in America can be linked to the culture of the part of England that their forefathers came from.<sup>482</sup> The first settlers in Massachusetts were Puritans from Eastern English counties and had strong traditions of town meetings and ordered liberty. More southern settlers in Virginia however, brought more hierarchical and oligarchic traditions from other parts of England. More inland settlements that in America were characterized by more rugged individualism and clannishness came from England northern counties as well as the Scottish lowlands.

From our focus on the influence of maritime culture on the United States, we will now turn to a feature of the land as a force shaping American culture, namely the before mentioned frontier. It is a different geographical feature that elucidates the culture that has shaped America. Moreover, the character of the land resembles the character of the sea orientation that we distinguished in Anglo-Saxon countries. In contrast with Continental Europe, the land of the frontier is not the steady territory of a specific locality, but instead has the ‘maritime’ qualities of migration, independence and exploration. More specifically, the frontier can be seen as a formative force in the more assertive and expansive character we encountered in the United States. As Turner quotes: “It appears that the universal disposition of Americans to emigrate to the western wilderness, in order to enlarge their dominion over inanimate nature, is the actual result of *an expansive power which is inherent in them*, and which by continually agitating all classes of society is constantly throwing a large portion of the whole population on the extreme confines of the State, in order to gain space for development.”<sup>483</sup>

The effect of the frontier was to continuously render people outside of civilization and into the wilderness. Lacking social and natural restraints, it gave individuals free play. Resources were there to be seized by the boldest in the land of opportunity or ‘the wild West’. The self-made man was the Western man’s ideal. The materialism and unrestrained celebration of markets that America is often blamed for has an inner significance in the spirit of the frontier. The acquisition of goods is accompanied by the ideals of equal opportunity, inventiveness and an

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<sup>481</sup> E. Sosa, *The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge*, in: L.M. Alcock (ed.), *Epistemology: The Big Questions*, Malden, Massachusetts, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998, p. 187

<sup>482</sup> D. Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991 (1989)

<sup>483</sup> Grund, as quoted in: F.J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, p. 7. Italics mine.

exaltation of the common man. The American pioneer had visions of inventing new ways. In the words of Turner: “this quest after the unknown, this yearning “beyond the sky line, where the strange roads go down”, is of the very essence of the backwoods pioneer, even though he was unconscious of its spiritual significance”<sup>484</sup>. The belief in the inherent capacities of the individual and the virtues of the common man connected with the republican spirit of the country’s politics, giving its attachment to democracy an almost religious character. The spirit of the frontier thus helps us to shed light on the particular features of American society that we encountered in the fields of education, political economy and modern thought. It makes sense of the style of fierce competition that we discerned and the cultural type of the expansive individual. The ‘pioneer’ and the ‘Yankee’ were early incarnations of this character of the expansive individual.



*American Progress by John Gast. The migration to the Western frontier is accompanied by godly assistance carrying a telegraph wire and a book*

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<sup>484</sup> Idem, p. 271

As we emphasized at the outset of our discussion on the significance of the geographical environment, these factors do not have a direct influence, but through their cultural interpretation.<sup>485</sup> According to Turner, the end of the nineteenth century marked the end of the conquest of the physical frontier. The task he saw ahead was that of further spiritualizing the spirit of the frontier for which he turned to the universities who should adjust the pioneer ideals. Almost a century later, we can see how this task has been taken up. The pioneer spirit has been redirected from the conquest of new land to opening new horizons through technological means. The technological revolutions in America in heavy industry and outer space, the invention of the automotive, the computer and the internet went together with the rise of new types of entrepreneurial individuals, the contemporary ‘pioneers’. Through the university, Silicon Valley in America’s West represents the further spiritualization of the spirit of the frontier and “the yearning beyond the sky line”.<sup>486</sup>

The work of Oswald Spengler ties in with the argument on the cultural significance of the geographical factors of land and sea in European countries in ways that differ from and supplement our discussion this far. Spengler argues that the character of England is intimately tied with the fact that it is an island. As an island, the country is protected from enemies by the sea. As a result, there has been no need for it to develop a strong state. In England, the island “displaces the organized state”.<sup>487</sup> From this weaker necessity to develop an organized state or public sector, we come to the orientation on the private sphere, which we distinguished in England’s modernization. The style of this society was one of competition between private individuals and the cultural type that of the gentleman. By contrast, Germany and the earlier state of Prussia lack the protection of natural barriers and instead is placed on the Northern European Plain in the middle of different European powers. This geographical factor did require a strong state and from it the tradition of public service that we have discerned emerged. In the religious sphere we also saw a spirit of service. The style we found in Germany was that of concerted action and the cultural type was that of the civil servant.

From this orientation towards the private sphere and the public sphere, Spengler shows how different types of culture emerged. In England, the private orientation flourished in the noble society it forged. This community of noble private individuals in England is addressed by the formulation “ladies and gentlemen”. It is a community of wealth, leisure and celebration of individual achievement. This society of private individuals is in which the English spirit finds

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<sup>485</sup> On the spirit of America, Turner notes: “The West, at bottom, is a form of society, rather than an area”. Idem, p. 205

<sup>486</sup> Interestingly, Turner states that the opening of a new physical frontier also went together with lax financial integrity and speculation. Idem, p. 32. As the frontier has subsequently moved to technological horizons we see the same pattern. The internet bubble of the early twenty-first century represents the same combination of speculation with a new frontier.

<sup>487</sup> O. Spengler, *Preußentum und Sozialismus*, Leipzig: Superbia Verlag, 2007 (1922), p. 36

its pinnacle. Its mores and etiquette are thus attended to with the greatest care. In its extreme form it manifests itself in the typical English snobbism. In the orientation on the public sphere and through the spirit of service, such a “society” is lacking in Germany. The intensity that the English spirit places in leisurely society, the German spirit places in work and rank. It is found in the so-called *Arbeitsfreude* (‘joy of working’) of Germans. From work comes the order of rank. This links with what we saw in the field of political economy as the high skills profile of Germany with extensive training and apprenticeship programs and the cooperative style of capitalism. In modern thought it is reflected in the concern to organize as well as moralize the economy and ground it in the state. In education we saw the formative principle of service to the state. Just as English culture has snobbism at its extreme, its German counterpart is the obsession with titles (*Titelsucht*).<sup>488</sup> This difference in the pre-eminence of the public or the private sphere is reflected in the intensity that is attached to the maintaining the mores, manners and etiquette of these spheres. The German spirit has placed the greatest intensity in the spirit of service and made the uniform of public service a symbol.<sup>489</sup> It corresponds with Frederick the Great’s remark “I am the first servant of the state”. Its English counterpart is the private person’s clothing. This clothing for society in England operates according to Spengler under greater discipline and strictness than the German uniform.

Thus whereas the German spirit places the greatest intensity in service and *Arbeitsfreude*, it is in the culture of comfort that the English spirit has its pinnacle. This sheds light on what we saw when we looked at modern thought. In England we saw the prevalence of the passions over reason and a sensualism that corresponds to the comfort enjoyed in society. Utilitarianism expresses the centrality of private desires and feelings. From Mandeville to Shaftesbury and Bentham, the focus is on individuals pursuing their desires and looking for comfort. Hegel too saw in English society an emphasis on particularity and individual feeling:

Der Engländer hat das Gefühl der Freiheit im besonderen; er bekümmert sich nicht um den Verstand, sondern im Gegenteil, fühlt sich um so mehr frei, je mehr das, was er tut oder tun kann, gegen den Verstand, d.h. gegen allgemeine Bestimmungen, ist.<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> Idem, p. 41

<sup>489</sup> The attraction to this symbol in other cultures we saw in chapter II, where we looked at the Japanese taking on German military dress.

<sup>490</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte (Werke 12)*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986 (1837), p. 511. And further on he describes England in a way that comes very close to our depiction in the course of this chapter: “Englands Verfassung ist aus lauter *partikulären Rechten* und besonderen Privilegien zusammengesetzt: die Regierung ist wesentlich verwaltend, d.i. das Interesse aller besondere Stände und Klassen wahrnehmend; und diese besondere Kirche, Gemeinden, Grafschaften, Gesellschaften sorgen für sich selbst, so dass die Regierung eigentlich nirgend weniger zu tun hat als in England. Dies ist hauptsächlich das, was die Engländer ihre Freiheit nennen, und das Gegenteil der Zentralisation der Verwaltung”.



Against this type of philosophy, in Germany we find a philosophy of duty. It is against individual impulses (*Neigung*) that Kant's categorical imperative is to be followed. Reverence for the law motivates moral action. It is not Mandevillean egoism, but the duty to work that drives the Fichtean state. Just like the distinction between empiricism and rationalism, we can embed the philosophy of comfort and that of duty in the larger historical patterns of societies.

With Schmitt and Spengler we have attributed differences between England and Germany to the cultural significance of the sea and the land. Whereas for Schmitt, the transition to the sea occurred in the course of the modern age (in England with the reign of Queen Elizabeth), Spengler traces the differences further back and to different influences. Spengler traces the sea-like character of England back to its conquest by the Normans under William I ('the Conqueror') in 1066. From its early origins, it was a 'Viking spirit', or a 'pirate spirit', that shaped English culture. Germany however, was formed by a different spirit, that of the knightly orders. Not the spirit of conquest for booty, but a spirit of loyal service in the fight against enemies shaped German character. Whereas the Viking follows the great idea of personal independence, the knight has the over-individual community as the leading idea. And whereas personal responsibility, self-determination, commitment and initiative are the former's virtues, loyalty, discipline, honour and asceticism are the virtues of the latter.<sup>491</sup>

Out of the knights of the orders and their spirit of service eventually the modern state official emerged to which we will return in a moment. From the pirate or Viking and his quest for booty, in time the free trader emerged. Spengler traces modern institutions and principles to the calculations of these pirates. Words like cheque, account, control, record and exchequer find their origin in the reign and calculation rooms of Robert I, the father of William the Conqueror.<sup>492</sup>

From this background, we can gain a new perspective on modern thought. The philosophy of Thomas Hobbes and his famous depiction of men in the state of nature in perpetual war with each other, as a consequence of which his life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short"<sup>493</sup>, can be interpreted as a pirate-like spirit. Hobbesian man is driven by an incessant quest for power and wealth, leading to harsh competition and making men wolves to each other ("homo homini lupus est"). Just as we interpreted the pioneer of the West as an early manifestation of the American expansive individual, we can see an early manifestation of the English gentleman in the pirates Hobbes describes. Both are characterized by a strong individualism, a quest for goods or booty, and a fierce competition.

Yet just as Hobbes' solution to this competition in the authoritarian ruler (,written with the English civil war in mind) is out of tune with the modern English spirit, so the pirate differs

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<sup>491</sup> O. Spengler, *Preußentum und Sozialismus*, pp. 35 and 51

<sup>492</sup> Spengler's tracing of the modern German state and its characteristics to the feudal knights strongly resembles the influence of the samurai spirit that we traced in the modern Japanese state. See section II.B

<sup>493</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 186

from the cultural type of the gentleman. The authoritarian ruler is required because of the uncultivated character of the pirate, which differs from the gentleman. Being cultivated and well-mannered, competition becomes less harsh and spontaneous order can arise from it. This is the interpretation of natural man given by John Locke, Bernard Mandeville and Adam Smith. In their eyes, natural man is driven by a competition for goods ( “a propensity to truck, barter and exchange one thing for another”<sup>494</sup>) which can happen in a well-mannered orderly fashion.

The celebration of the free private individual in England can thus be traced back to the Viking background. The free individual and the struggle for existence can, according to Spengler, already be found in the Icelandic sagas.<sup>495</sup> And this struggle for existence is later found in English philosophy and science, from Smith and Buckle to Malthus and Darwin.

The unplanned spontaneous order that arises from individual interactions is what Mead has called the “golden meme” of Anglo-Saxon society.<sup>496</sup> It can be found of course in the invisible hand and the Mandevillian beehive as well as the Baconian method of science and order in the Newtonian universe consisting of particles with their own propensities. The golden meme is found in the English common law tradition, in which precedent rules over rational plan, Jeffersonian democracy, Darwinism, in which the higher life forms arise from chaos, and the gradualism of Victorian geology.

Although we have followed the Spenglerian line of tracing English culture to the Viking spirit and German culture to that of the knightly orders, there is a sense in which we can also distinguish a knightly spirit in Anglo-Saxon culture. Such a spirit namely stands for Spengler at the basis of Western culture, which he calls Faustian. One of the core sources of this culture is the story of *Parsifal*. The knightly longing for the infinite characterizes the whole of Western culture. From what we have discussed above on Anglo-Saxon culture we can discern a knightly spirit in it, but then emphasizing a different aspect than in the case of German culture. Whereas in Germany, the knightly principle was found in the spirit of service and duty, we can interpret phenomena from Anglo-Saxon culture through the knightly idea of the individual quest.

We saw that the individualism of the American frontier should not be interpreted in a materialist fashion, but that it had a strong idealistic attachment to it. The intensity of the focus on self-improvement, or what Ralph Waldo Emerson described as “self-reliance” can be interpreted through the lens of the individual quest. It is the same spirit that is found in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem “Excelsior”. It tells the story of the young man walking through the mountains, continuing against the warnings of others, until his body is finally found in the snow, still carrying his banner saying “Excelsior”(“ever higher”). Mead argues

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<sup>494</sup> A. Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, p. 117

<sup>495</sup> O. Spengler, *Preußentum und Sozialismus*, p. 37

<sup>496</sup> W.R. Mead, *God and Gold*, pp. 297-315

against the purely materialist interpretation of American business: “John D. Rockefeller saw the organization and rationalization of the oil industry as a heroic adventure every bit as spiritually and morally necessary as Quixote’s charge”<sup>497</sup>.

And from a further perspective, we can cast above mentioned phenomena in the light of modern religious ideas that had the same character of the individual quest. The journey into the unknown was earlier interpreted from the more ‘secular’ perspective of the frontier. Yet in Protestantism, we also find a strong focus on the Abrahamic theme of the abandonment of the familiar for a godly calling. The theme of leaving home, which we saw as constitutive of American upbringing, is the starting point of Bunyan’s religious story *Pilgrim’s Progress*.

The religious origins of modern economic activity are also stressed by Spengler. Capitalism emerged from the spirit of the Puritans. He contrasts this with socialism, which he interprets in a way different from its common meaning, that has its origin in Pietism.<sup>498</sup> Socialism is for him the mode of organization that derives from the German spirit, which in modernity is exemplified in the state official. Socialism for him then, is the mode of organization in which officials and authority according to rank have pre-eminence. This is contrasted with the capitalism that is dominated by wealthy business men like Andrew Carnegie or entrepreneurs like Cecil Rhodes, for whom the world is a large hunting ground.

The final line of reasoning for which we will turn to Spengler here concerns his comparison of ruling principles in England, Germany and France. Regarding France, we will see how his analysis elucidates some part of the phenomena we have described in this chapter, but from our investigation we will also come to a different overall characterization of France than that of Spengler.

Spengler attributes one of the concepts of the slogan of the French Revolution to the three countries, which corresponds with three different answers to the question of who should rule.<sup>499</sup> English modernity developed under the banner of liberty, whereas modern France is driven by the quest for equality and modern Germany for fraternity. The English emphasis on liberty means freedom of interference from state and others and hence the answer to the question of who should rule is here ‘the individual’. It corresponds with what we have argued above on the private individual or the gentleman in England. Furthermore, it corresponds with the style of competition and the characterization as personal capitalism. In Germany, the emphasis on fraternity or community makes ‘the whole’ or ‘the totality’ the answer to the question of who should. This ties in with the spirit of service and the character of the civil servant. Moreover, it fits in strongly with the style of concerted action and the characterization of cooperative capitalism. In France finally, the aspiration of equality implies according to Spengler that the answer to the question of who should rule is ‘no one’. The

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<sup>497</sup> Idem, p. 238

<sup>498</sup> O. Spengler, *Preußentum und Sozialismus*, p. 100

<sup>499</sup> Idem, pp. 18-20

concept of equality can be placed in the light of what we have encountered up to now. In French thought and the French Revolution we saw the postulation of a metaphysical unity of the people that is sovereign as a singular will. Moreover, Napoleonic rule did not establish the particularity of the English gentleman, but the equality of all before the law. However, the idea that no one should rule stems from Spengler's characterization of the French as anarchist. We did encounter this line in our investigation. We saw it as a strand in modern French thought as well as in the anarcho-syndicalist line in the French labour movement. However, we placed this anarchist line as secondary to the style of dirigisme and the character of the anarchist as secondary and complementary to the character of the technocrat. For Spengler, it are Proudhon, for whom property is theft, and Fourier with his utopian communes that are characteristic of the French spirit. The centralized rule of France is the secondary phenomenon that is prompted by this anarchism. Interestingly, we find a similar characterization in the philosophy of Hegel. He sees in France "the principle of atoms" ("das Prinzip der Atome"): "Alles soll durch ihre ausdrückliche Macht und ausdrückliche Einwilligung geschehen. Mit diesem Formellen der Freiheit, mit dieser Abstraktion lassen sie nichts Festes von Organisation aufkommen."<sup>500</sup> However, in our investigation we have discerned the powerful tradition of dirigisme throughout French education, political economy and also French modern thought. From this reasoning, it are not Proudhon and Fourier, but Descartes, Diderot, and Comte that caught French character in theory.<sup>501</sup> From this we can tie in with a different suggestion that Spengler makes on French culture. Our idea of the dirigiste style went together with an elite of planners and their great designs. The grand geste has pre-modern origins at the centralized French court. From this emphasis on geste and design, we can discern a more aesthetic inclination in French culture. Spengler too acknowledges the powerful influence of France on the rest of the world in terms of aesthetics and the art of living. French ideas of the good life and fine manners made it a cultural beacon. In the realm of clothing, we saw in England an intense focus on the clothing for society life and in Germany on the uniform. For Spengler, the French contribution has been in the realm of fashion and particularly female couture.<sup>502</sup> It is linked with the famous culture of the Parisian passages. This role it still holds in the modern fashion industry with its great amount of leading designers.<sup>503</sup>

In our investigation in this section of what constitutes the unity of the patterns we saw in the countries we are looking at, we came across the Netherlands when we looked at the influence of the sea. We saw there that the country shared this influence with the Anglo-Saxon societies and that it went together with a free entrepreneurial spirit, a liberal orientation and a

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<sup>500</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, p. 534

<sup>501</sup> Of course we need to emphasize that both lines are present in French philosophy and in the thought of the great thinker Rousseau we find both the anarchist line and the unitary will of the people.

<sup>502</sup> O. Spengler, *Preußentum und Sozialismus*, p. 90

<sup>503</sup> And more broadly, its strength in projecting an idea of the good life can still be seen in its export of quality foods.

decentralized organization. Next to the sea, which played an important role in the formation of Dutch character in the modern era, we can discern another geographical element that like the frontier, the sea or the Alps in other countries, has had a spiritual significance for the country and that is the polder. Being a country that for a large part lies under sea level, the water thus had a different impact than in other countries. The winning of land from the sea and the protection against floods has had an influence that like the phenomena we discerned in the previous sections, place it in between the Anglo-Saxon and the Continental societies.

On the one hand, the conquest of land from the sea has created a pioneering spirit, like the American conquest of the frontier. This conquest went together with a republican spirit of freedom. It for instance made feudal rule less rigid than in Continental countries. As Schama argues, the threat of floods has since the 11<sup>th</sup> century led lords to offer semi-free tenurial status to farmers willing to colonize and settle in the region. As “boats and barges” replaced “horses and carts” feudalism was developed only weakly.<sup>504</sup> This implied decentralization and power was conceived in an ascending way rather than devolving from above as we saw in earlier sections. As the young republic emerged in the sixteenth century leading figures like Jan Adriaanszoon Leeghwater and Johan Van Oldenbarneveldt played an important part in the further wresting of land from the water. Contemporary authors linked this geographical factor to the burgher spirit of the country. Vierlingh for instance spoke negatively of “the slippers, the tabards, and the fine fur mantles which have no value at the dikes”.<sup>505</sup> And De Hooghe further characterized this spirit in contrast with that of other countries: “The differences between these Lands [and other states] is most singular: glory in other lands reposing in an outward show of flags but here in the manner of thrifty and modest households; elsewhere there is honor in the free spending of money... here there is honor in having no debts.”<sup>506</sup>

On the other hand however, this free and decentralized spirit went together with a greater degree of focus on cooperation and unity than in the Anglo-Saxon countries. Whereas the frontier is about individual conquest and dangers, the threat of floods in the polder made for strong collective challenges and required a stronger emphasis on conservation.<sup>507</sup> From the bottom-up, a large degree of cooperation was required. Dutch character was shaped by the trials by water, that were interpreted as ordeals (*beproevingen*) as is also expressed in the patriotic motto “Eendracht maakt macht” (“unity makes power”).<sup>508</sup>

The combination of a high degree of decentralization with a focus on cooperation led to a strongly consultative style of leadership, which has been dubbed the ‘poldermodel’. Femme

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<sup>504</sup> S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, pp. 39-40

<sup>505</sup> Andries Vierling, as quoted in: idem, p. 43

<sup>506</sup> Romeyn de Hooghe, as quoted in: idem, p. 53

<sup>507</sup> Of course in America there were also collective challenges like the struggle with the American Indians. For Turner this is indeed a force that created greater unity and contributed to the development of the republic.

<sup>508</sup> Idem, pp. 25 and 33

S. Gaastra has studied how this style of leadership was typical of the Dutch East India Company, the VOC. Although at its heydays the largest company in the world, it is interesting to note that none of its directors have become important names in Dutch history books. As a great many of actors and parties were concerned with the policy of the company, the consultative leadership style also required mechanisms through which decisions could be made easier. Early coordination in back rooms (*achterkamertjes*) was one such mechanism.<sup>509</sup> Gaastra notes that the typical mode of organization can also be seen from comparing it with its English counterpart, the East India Company. In line with the more cooperative style that place the Netherlands closer to the Continental societies, two differences stand out. The consultative style meant that there were no fierce open debates in the VOC like those that characterized the East India Company. Secondly, following more of a stakeholder model, the shareholders in the VOC were much less powerful and influential in the decision-making process than in its English counterpart.<sup>510</sup>

In our discussion of different perspectives that help us shed light on the different phenomena we have encountered in the previous sections, instead of finding very particular and concrete influences, we have found that the unity across spheres is constituted by an overall spirit or conception of the world and man's place in it. We have refrained from a geographical determinism and instead have emphasized that it is the way that such factors are interpreted in a society that gives them their formative effect. As such, we have seen that religion plays a central role in the formation of the different paths of modernity that we have looked at in the West. As religion is concerned with the ultimate questions of life and death and man's place in the world, it animates the spirit of a society in its core. We encountered the Anglican Church and Puritanism in England, the more Evangelical and activist religiosity of the Americans, Lutheranism and later Pietism in Germany, Calvinism in the Netherlands and the influence of Catholicism in France as central forces in creating the multiple modernities of these countries. Even in our contemporary age, when many Western societies have become less religious, we can still see its influence. Secularization has for instance strongly changed the Dutch churches. However, the Calvinist spirit of soberness and the pride we encountered in not having any debts, still is a characteristic of its society. A joke in the financial world is that the Netherlands are the only country in the world where the elderly are still saving for later.

The spirit of societies we have sought to shed light on is manifested in the patterns in the different fields we have investigated but also expressed in the field of aesthetics. Paintings from the Dutch Golden Age, like Rembrandt's *De Staalmeesters* depicted above, directly express the character of the stern burgher and his practical concept of Enlightenment, just like

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<sup>509</sup> F.S. Gaastra, 'Het poldermodel kenmerkend voor de VOC?', in: D. Bos, M. Ebben and H. te Velde, *Harmonie in Holland: Het poldermodel van 1500 tot nu*, Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2007, p. 103

<sup>510</sup> Idem, pp. 105-108

John Trumbull's painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence expresses the American concept of freedom. From the deep sense of meaning in a society, pertaining to its view on the world and man's place in it, the aesthetic realm can express the inner character of societies. Interesting in this account is the field of gardening. Styles of gardening express a view of man's relationship to nature. An often made distinction is that between the English and the French garden. The English garden is characterized by subtlety, natural growth and a romantic sense of harmony with nature. By contrast, the French garden is characterized by strict lines and symmetry. From our perspective we can see in the English garden the harmony of spontaneous development, the invisible green hand, a belief in gentle natural growth and traditionalism, whereas the French garden is rational, centralized and dirigiste.

These different fields are complementary, in the sense we described as mutually reinforcing each other and creating a 'common sense' that gives the individual fields the air of naturalness and 'fit'. The gardens of Versailles 'make sense' with the fatherly style of French presidents, which would be unthinkable in the Netherlands. The spontaneous order from competing forces in the English garden 'fit' with the politics of English Parliament, which reverberates aristocrats duelling, making the iron *lady* Margaret Thatcher typical for England, but out of place in Germany.



*The Orangerie in the ground of the Palace of Versailles<sup>511</sup>*

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<sup>511</sup> From French <fr:Image:Orangerie.jpg>, personal photo under GFDL license by <fr:Utilisateur:Urban>

Having discerned the forces of universal modernization (Chapter I), the persistence of traditional culture (Chapter II) and the dynamics pertaining to the influence of traditional culture in the modern world (Chapter III), we have now completed our empirical investigation. Next we will turn our perspective around and reinterpret the phenomena we have encountered, but now from a more philosophical investigation of the influence of these forces on the human condition.



## **Chapter IV: Modernization & Traditional Culture: Technopolis versus Embeddedness**

### ***Introduction***

At this point, we have answered the first part of our research question and in order to answer the second part we need to take a different point of view. Throughout the whole of this investigation we are exploring the dynamic between the process of modernization and the forces of culture deriving from local traditions. In this chapter we will continue our investigation of this topic, but from a different perspective.

Up to now, we have pursued a mostly empirical investigation in which we strongly drew on material from the social sciences. We have traced the dynamic we are studying here with the help of studies in fields like economics, political science and demography. As such, our approach was from a macro perspective. We did look at the motivation behind the behavior of people and we did look at specific local practices. However, we approached these from a broad perspective as our interest was mainly in discerning general societal developments. Approaching the dynamic under study here from this social science perspective, we have taken a view from ‘the outside’. In the first chapter we took a more quantitative approach which in the next two chapters moved in the direction of the inner dimension.

In this chapter we will again approach the same dynamic, but now we will do this by seeking to articulate it from the view point of human experience. In other words, we will take the view from ‘inside’. In this sense, we are turning our perspective one-hundred-and eighty degrees.

We have discerned the general pattern of the process of modernization (chapter I), in which we saw that society changes fundamentally in the four fields of economics, socio-demographics, state institutions and regime type. We have also seen that within and underneath this process, the forces of culture and its local traditions persist in a transformed way. We have looked at how they shaped modernization in fields like the state or civil society (chapter II). We have also looked at the patterns across spheres within a society that give its path of modernization a specific and relatively coherent character (chapter III). With this, we have gained a perspective on how the universal forces of modernization relate to culture deriving from local traditions, which was the first part of our initial question. The second part of our initial question, which we will address in this chapter is: How do these phenomena relate to the human condition?

In other words, how the forces of modernization and the persistence of traditional culture in the realm of modernity shape the lives of people existentially? How do these two forces impact human experience? First of all, how does human life change as a result of the general directionality in the heart of the process of modernization? And secondly, if we have seen the

persistence of local traditions, what does this mean in terms of the human condition? Can we understand why they persist and in what relationship they stand to the experience of modernity?

Looking at this dynamic in terms of the human condition necessarily concerns the issue of meaning. Everyday life and experience is tied up with stable sources of meaning, as well as the loss of meaning, change in meaning, and the creation of new meaning. Whereas the first part of this investigation dealt with broad societal patterns, giving it a more social-scientific character, this part will be a venture in philosophical anthropology. The sources we will draw on will come more from philosophy, cultural anthropology, certain fields of sociology and authors from other fields that can aid us in our investigation. The method of a large part of this chapter will be phenomenological. Moving from the outside to the inside view, we will seek to decipher how certain general developments phenomenologically enter the experience of people. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach initially developed by Edmund Husserl and followed by thinkers like Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Emmanuel Levinas. In all of their works, their method of phenomenology differs and is tied to their specific philosophical projects. We will for a large part of our investigation in this chapter take from the method the suggestion to ‘suspend theory’ and describe phenomena as they appear.

The approach of the previous chapters and the one starting in this chapter supplement each other. The investigation of the previous chapters grounds our whole endeavor. It provides us with a broad background of cases and phenomena in which we can discern the dynamic of our study. It gives a solid foundation to our following investigation of the human condition because the choice of themes we will look at will not be arbitrary, but instead will be based on a consideration of the general societal developments that we have investigated. On the other hand, the approach starting in this chapter will supplement the previous approach because only by looking at *what it means* for the human condition, can we orient ourselves on the issues that face us.

The two parts of this chapter will deal respectively with the question of what the forces of modernization imply for human experience and secondly with the experiential implications of traditional culture. The answer to the first question will be that we are drawn into the world we call *Technopolis*, whereas traditional culture provides us with *Embeddedness*.

Having discerned how these two forces impact the human condition, we will have to return with our developed framework to the phenomena of the previous chapters. Having articulated what the experience of modernity as well as the persistence of traditional culture amount to, we will look at how these two stances shape our world and ask how they relate to each other. This will be the subject of chapter V. Whereas in that chapter we will look at their dynamic relationship, in this chapter we will look at them separately. Our description of both the forces of Technopolis and Embeddedness will be what Weber called “ideal-typical”. We will follow the inherent tendencies of both poles to get a grasp of what their logic amounts to.

First in this chapter we need to understand how the process of modernization impacts the human condition. Central here is that we will argue that it creates a *way of relating* that can be characterized as ‘detachment’ and an organization of the world that we will call Technopolis.<sup>512</sup>

## **A). Modernization As Technopolis**

### **1). The Rise of Technopolis**

In chapter I we analyzed the general societal development of the process of modernization, which in this chapter will be reinterpreted in terms of its impact on the human condition. We saw a directionality in different fields, but we also saw that they were related to each other, creating a ‘total package’ of modernization. In the concluding sections of that chapter we found that modern technology played a key role in the formation of this total package. It was modern technology and its great capacity to manipulate our natural environment which made possible the capitalist mode of production which in turn led to a movement through different stages of economic development. This then facilitated change in the other fields, like urbanization and the growth of literacy in socio-demographics, a process of rationalization in state institutions and it underpinned democratic politics (although we also saw that the causality in some cases can work the other way around). Modern technology also impacted the fields outside of economics more directly through for instance modern media which impact socio-demographics and democratization.

Modern technology can thus be identified as a central force in the unfolding of modernity. It is also the same force that Francis Fukuyama identified for explaining the directionality in history and arguing for the vindication of Modernization Theory. He deduced capitalism and several social changes from the existence of modern technology, which he supplemented with a theory of human nature to account for the rise of modern democracy. Moreover, with the

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<sup>512</sup> In the course of the discussion of Technopolis we will often refer to concepts from the work of modern philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Karl Marx as well as Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche. This is not from a belief that philosophy has a privileged position in history or, as some have claimed, that it is a prime mover of history. Philosophy did not invent modernity, but it did provide us with powerful articulations of its development, which is why we will resort to these authors. As Charles Taylor has described, philosophy did also have an influential role in formulating powerful ideas that legitimated certain practices and structures.

struggle for recognition being a permanent feature of human nature, it was the process initiated by modern technology that facilitated the rise of democracy in the modern age.<sup>513</sup>

Having identified technology as a central force in the process of modernization, we want here to understand how it impacts the human condition. From the different technological achievements of the modern age, a force emanates that modifies our way of relating to world and self in a fundamental way. Inherent in the process of modernization is a specific vision of man and world that we will seek to uncover in the following. To get an initial grasp of this vision and new way of relating we need to briefly discuss some of the technological innovations that shaped the modern world. This will in no way be an exhaustive account of the rise of modern technology. Here we want to chronologically highlight some of the inventions that shaped the modern age on which we will draw in the next section to decipher the specific vision and way of relating that emanates from the process of modernization. So first we will take a short detour by sketching the background rise of modern technology from which in the next section we will derive its impact on the human condition.

A first critical technological invention was the mechanical clock, which has origins that date back to before the modern age. It appeared in the last quarter of the 13<sup>th</sup> century simultaneously in England and Italy. It was applied widely by both ecclesiastical organizations and by the cities. To order the daily schedules of monks as well as to regulate city life (like work times and opening times for markets) the mechanical clock proved to be very useful. Previously people had to rely on sun and water clocks, but these were much less accurate because they were strongly influenced by natural factors like temperature and sedimentation.<sup>514</sup> This made it harder for time to be standardized and thus to coordinate actions. With the mechanical clock this was made much easier and this way productivity could be enhanced greatly. The application of the clock to warfare in the United Provinces of the Netherlands and later by Frederick the Great of Prussia made it possible to standardize and rationalize activities which greatly improved the capacities of these armies. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the same technique was meticulously implemented in the assembly lines of Henry Ford and in Frederick Taylor's scientific management. This is why for Lewis Mumford, the mechanical clock and not the steam engine was the key machine of the modern age.<sup>515</sup> This implied a tremendous transformation of everyday life and work especially. In contrast with the peasant that orients himself on the tasks at hand, for which time is a constraint, time is no longer filled with activities but becomes the neutral unit in which efforts can be maximized, measuring products per unit of time. This is what we will below interpret as the 'emptying' of time. Without the standardization of time, our current system of international business and finance would not be possible.

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<sup>513</sup> For this see his subsequent assessment in F. Fukuyama, 'Reflections on the End of History, Five Years Later', in: *History and Theory*, Vol. 34, No. 2, May, 1995, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 27-43

<sup>514</sup> D.S. Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998, p. 48

<sup>515</sup> L. Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010 (1934), p. 12-18

Just as with time, we can see a similar development with regard to the orientation towards space. Like the clock and modern calendars, the modern map, to which we will return more extensively below, made standardization and coordinated action possible. Advancements in seafaring technology in the early modern age spurred ‘the age of discovery’ through the oceanic explorations we encountered in the last chapter. In this sense Peter Sloterdijk speaks of a phase of globalization far before contemporary developments, in which the blank spots and enigmas on the globe’s map were filled in. The standardization and control of seafaring routes greatly spurred human mobility, which has been a key development in subsequent technological innovation. The invention of the steam engine and the railroads in the first Industrial Revolution in Britain improved the mobility of goods and people over land. After the test of the ‘Rocket’ steam engine for the Liverpool-Manchester railway in 1829 a global process was initiated in which the high speed travel over land was woven into everyday life in the form of travelling and the greater reach of markets.<sup>516</sup> This increase in mobility is the dominant theme in later technological inventions like the automobile and the airplane, deriving from the internal combustion engine.

Another set of technological inventions that greatly shaped the modern world involves the rise of new media. Next to the physical mobility that the previous set of technologies made possible, we will explore these technologies in the course of this section as an extension of ‘psychic mobility’. A milestone in the development of modern media was of course Gutenberg’s invention of movable type and the creation of the printed word. Within fifty years of this invention, printing shops had emerged all across Europe and became powerful agents of modernity. The transmission of ‘mediated’ experience was greatly enhanced and it has been estimated that the amount of printed materials produced has doubled every fifteen years since the time of Gutenberg.<sup>517</sup> Books but also newspapers have been instrumental in spreading knowledge and experience from places far beyond the reach of people’s daily environment. The telegraph further expanded the reach of information flows and contributed to a higher content of far-away events in the media people used. There was in Anthony Giddens’ words an “intrusion of distant events in everyday consciousness”<sup>518</sup>. Radio and television continued this trend in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, supplemented by the rise of ICT in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. From mainframes to microprocessors, personal computers, mobile phones and of course the rise of the internet, we see an extension of pervasive themes in modern technology. Space and time are standardized, the control over humans and the natural environment is increased and mobility in different forms is enhanced. What such developments imply for the human condition will be taken up next. First a final group of

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<sup>516</sup> C. Perez, *Technological Revolutions and Financial Capital: The Dynamics of Bubbles and Golden Ages*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2002 For an overview of the technological revolutions that Carlota Perez distinguishes, see p. 8-21

<sup>517</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 25

<sup>518</sup> Idem, p. 27

modern technologies that will be important for our following analysis concerns changes to the household.

This concerns phone cables, water lines and sewage systems, but perhaps the quintessential innovation was the electrification of the household. It made possible the development of a wide range of household appliances, but its greatest effects were in making heating and lighting for individuals easy. Improvements in the possibilities of lighting and heating meant that human activity was less bound up with natural rhythms like daylight or the seasons. Inside the home, people could be detached from natural rhythms and create their own. Of course we are still dependent on the natural world, not only for energy resources but also as a stable background, which we experience when natural events like storms, extreme cold or a strike of lightning disrupt our daily activities. But what is important is that ordinarily these dependencies are hidden and that an interior man-made world is created that detaches itself from its direct natural surroundings.

This brief sketch of technologies that were important in shaping the modern world provides us with a background from which to interpret the impact of modern technology on the human condition. Themes we touched on like standardization, control and mobility will be taken up in this interpretation.

What we will argue is that modern technology as a core force of modernization has a profound effect on the human condition. Modernization does not just provide us with better tools with which we can continue doing the activities we did before they existed. Technology should not be seen, as Martin Heidegger argued, as “only a means in the hands of man”, but instead impacts our existence as human beings.<sup>519</sup> It brings with it a certain way of relating and a vision of the world. This is what we will seek to uncover in the following.

First we will look at the different constitutive elements of the way of relating that is characteristic of modernity. For the analysis we will discuss them separately, although they are moments of a general development in which they always go together.<sup>520</sup> For the sake of getting a good grasp of these moments we will look at certain phenomena from the view point of an isolated moment. In subsequent sections, we will often retake the same phenomena to emphasize a different moment in them.

First we will look at how our natural environment is experienced as a result of the process of modernization. In modernity, the natural world is conceptualized and acted upon as raw material with no inherent meaning. In technical terms, the world is ‘neutralized’. The world is

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<sup>519</sup> Indeed, according to Heidegger the world appears to us as technology. It is the truth of our time. (M. Heidegger, *Die Technik und die Kehre*, Stuttgart: Neske, 1996 (1953), pp. 5-36)

<sup>520</sup> Although his approach is quite different, our idea of these moments together comprising of the general development of modernity compares with the work of Bruno Latour. The different elements of modernity could in his terms together be understood as its ‘constitution’. (B. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, Cambridge, Massachusettes: Harvard University Press, 1993 (1991), pp. 27-35)

neutralized as it is placed against a background of time and space that is ‘emptied’, as we will show.

Secondly, the self or the human subject comes to play a different role in modernity. We already saw this in our discussion of Modernization Theory where we described the rise of modern individualism. Here we will look at what the deeper implications of this development are in terms of the human condition. While the natural world is devoid of meaning in modernity or ‘disenchanted’, the self becomes more prominent and turns into the prime source of meaning. This different role of the self is the actualization of an age-old fantasy of mankind. As rational as modernity might appear (and be), we will argue that it actualizes in people the fantasy of the magician. Thirdly, we will characterize the stance that is concomitant to this new conceptualization of world and self. This is a stance that can be described as ‘detachment’ or ‘disembedding’. From these different constitutive elements or moments, we will go on to describe their joint effect. Taken together, these moments amount to a vision of the world we call Technopolis. With Technopolis we mean the permanent transformation and reorganization of the world and humanity according to the dictates of subjectivity. This part on Technopolis will first discuss this dynamic in its effect on the natural world and then on humanity.

## **2). The Constitutive Elements of Technopolis**

### *Neutralizing the World in Empty Space and Time*

In the brief sketch of technological developments that have been of paramount importance in the unfolding of modernity, we encountered themes like increasing standardization, control and mobility. In the discussion of the mechanical clock we saw a transformation from a concept of time that was tied to the natural environment (and its rhythms) and to specific tasks and activities towards a concept of time that was standardized and a neutral unit of calculation. This brings us to a first constitutive element of the impact of modernization on the human condition, namely *the emptying of space and time and the neutralization of the environment or natural world*. Put differently in the words of Benedict Anderson, modernization brings with it a conception and experience of “homogenous” time and space. As space and time become homogenous, the things in the world lose a sense of having a

natural place or of adhering to an order that gives them their particularity. The things in the natural world lose an intrinsic meaning, which is why we say that they are neutralized. We can illustrate this dynamic if we focus on the transformation of the conception of space in modernity in the development from the ancient to the modern map.

In the course of modernization we can discern a universal shift towards a particular type of map. The traditional types of maps used in Buddhist countries like Thailand were of two kinds.<sup>521</sup> The first was the cosmograph which was a symbolic representation of the Three Worlds of Buddhist cosmology. These maps had a vertical axis on which apart from the earth the supra-terrestrial heavens and the sub-terrestrial hells were depicted. The ancient *mandala* depicted a circular magical space with either a deity or a king at the centre of a realm. Power in Buddhist kingdoms then was not geographically strictly circumscribed. Borders were often not clear as power was conceptualized as emanating in circles from the center.<sup>522</sup>

The second type of maps were those used for military campaigns. These maps were better suitable for travel, but their scales were depicted in marching or sailing time rather than in absolute distance. The perspective on these maps was oblique as they were influenced by the verticality of the cosmograph. These maps did not depict clear borders nor did they situate the locality within a large defined geographical context. The verticality of maps had to do with the way in which great classical communities saw themselves as being located at the center of the cosmos. Traditional China for instance conceptualized itself as the Middle Kingdom. Pre-modern maps were filled with mystical or sacred places like Mecca in Muslim geography.

With modernity, the map changes fundamentally. Instead of having a vertical axis, they came to represent horizontal space. Sacred places were removed from the map and they became dots on a neutral plain on par with the other dots on the map. Space is no longer 'filled' with special or mystical places, but becomes a homogenous background. The objects on the map do not have an inherent natural place or meaning as they are qualitatively not different from each other. In other words, they are neutralized. The relations and distances between the places of the map are now described in universal mathematical terms. Absolute distances rather than travelling time becomes the measure of the modern map. The world view of the cosmograph was globally replaced by the map originally conceived by the Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator in 1569. A year later Abraham Ortelius would publish the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* which was the first modern atlas.

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<sup>521</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (Revised Edition)*, London: Verso, 2006 (1983), pp. 170-171

<sup>522</sup> M.S. Heidehues, *Southeast Asia: A Concise History*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2000, pp. 21-22





The emptying of time and space and the neutralization of the natural world is a key element of the way the process of modernization impacts the human condition. We can identify it in the earlier analyzed fields of modernization.

In the economic field, the rise of capitalism is associated with the same transformation of the world. The world view that cartographers and scientists espouse is actively realized by capitalist markets. The global reach of these markets organizes the world's resources, collects them as raw material after which they are processed and sold through vast supply chains in which they are neutral goods. In the pre-modern world there were also large market places and today still seasons determine the availability of certain food items. But it is the specific tendency of modern capitalism to detach goods from a naturally bound locality and spread them according to quantitative measures. We can contrast this with the pre-modern practice of taboos for the handling certain objects or the linkage of certain goods to social distinctions. The consumption of certain food articles, the handling of specific weapons, the entry to certain places and the usage of specific tools have traditionally been tied to all kinds of social distinctions. It was one of the ways in which the leisure class would socially distinguish itself through 'conspicuous leisure and consumption'.<sup>524</sup> Taboos or social privileges are tied to the inherent meaning a good or object has, which restricts its usage in time, space or to certain people. In capitalist markets, present in daily life in places like the supermarket and the

<sup>523</sup> Sources: Wikipedia Commons and Library of US Congress

<sup>524</sup> T. Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*, New York: Dover Publications, 1994 (1899)

shopping mall, only the quantitative measure of price separates goods. Goods do not belong in a natural order and they are the neutral material for the desires of consumers. We still have a sense that certain goods inherently belong to certain places or occasions. Champagne for instance is still tied to special occasions like New Year or other celebrations. If someone were to present us with champagne without announcing some kind of reason for celebration, we feel this is ‘out of place’. The overall development of capitalism however, is that goods are neutralized, i.e. they are material devoid of inherent meaning or natural place and time. Markets provide the ever-present horizon of goods as free-floating dots on a homogenous background.

Economic theory starts from the same assumptions. Objects are neutral in themselves. Their value derives from human preferences. This neutralization of the natural world comes close to what Max Weber called the ‘disenchantment’ of the world.<sup>525</sup> In modernity, the world is cleansed of magical beings and objects and instead is rationalized by men. Weber traces the origins of this modern world view to Protestantism, in which there are no intermediaries between God and individuals and in which the veneration of worldly objects is considered blasphemous. Instead of venerating and acquiescing to the way of the world, Protestants were called to work upon, transform and improve the earth. This zealous activity and the maxim to change the world in order to improve it is another aspect Technopolis to which we will return below.

The view of the natural world as a neutral aggregate of objects that have no inherent meaning is also something that emerges with early modern philosophy. In his polemic with pre-modern thought, Thomas Hobbes argued for the neutrality of the world, giving philosophical expression to an overall development of modernity:

But whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth *Good*; and the object of his Hate, and Aversion, *Evill*; And of his Contempt, *Vile*, and *Inconsiderable*. For these words of Good, Evill, and Contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: **There being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common Rule of Good and Evill, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves;** but from the Person of the man (where there is no Common-wealth;) or (in a Common-wealth) from the Person that representeth it; or from an Arbitrator or Judge, whom men disagreeing shall by consent set up, and make his sentence the Rule thereof.<sup>526</sup>

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<sup>525</sup> M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, New York: Dover Publications, 2003 (1958). Before the advent of Protestantism, we can already see other developments in the direction of a disenchanted world view. Occam already rejected forces between God’s will and creation, paving the way for a neutralized world.

<sup>526</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, London: Penguin Books, 1985 (1651), pp. 120-121 (bold marking mine). Making the same point, his contemporary Gassendi stated: “Things then are good and evil, only in reference to pleasure and pain”. (Quoted from: C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989, p. 169)

According to Hobbes, good and evil cannot be deduced from the nature of objects. Instead they derive from an object's relation to a person. Nature in itself does not exhibit a moral order and hence does not know good or evil. Hobbes rejects the idea that there is a meaningful order in reality from which the goals of human life can be adduced. With this rejection he goes against the tradition of philosophical thought: "For there is no such *Finis ultimus*, (utmost ayme,) nor *Summum Bonum*, (greatest Good,) as is spoken of in the Books of the old Morall Philosophers."<sup>527</sup> And the philosopher John Locke similarly conceptualized nature as neutral and as raw material for human use: "Nature and the Earth furnished only the almost worthless Materials, as in themselves"<sup>528</sup>.

This conception of the world can later be found in the philosophy of utilitarianism from which it moved to modern economics, where objects receive their value from their utility for people rather than any inherent feature. From utilitarianism and the world view of modern economics, the world is the collection of raw material.

In the field of socio-demographics we can discern the same dynamic. In the process of modernization, people move from farms to cities. In many pre-modern cultures, the farm land one is raised on is intimately connected with the people who live on it. The family has its 'natural place' on the farm and often land could thus also not be given or taken away legitimately. The mobility that comes with the process of urbanization changes people's relation to their life world. Being the outcome of choice or circumstance, the home in the city is also disenchanted. The similarity of skyscraper apartments and other mass construction housing is an expression of neutral objects in homogenous space. In Modernist architecture, houses are conceived as and turned into neutral points in empty space. The scientific management of Frederick Taylor that placed work in empty time is the counterpart of Modernist architecture which does the same spatially.<sup>529</sup> For the architect Le Corbusier, houses are "machines for living in". It is thus a neutral object with no inherent meaning or natural place; it is an industrial tool.

A similar development can be seen in another area of socio-demographic change, the spread of literacy. It is a precondition for much of the media technologies that we mentioned above. In pre-modern societies where literacy is low, knowledge and news is communicated orally and is thus tied to the locality. Modern literacy and education increase the extent of written or mediated experience in everyday life.

The transformation of the family also plays an important part in socio-demographic change. The sense of a natural place with a natural occupation is in many pre-modern societies linked with the ties to one's ancestors. In the modern city, family life is changed and relations in the

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<sup>527</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 160

<sup>528</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 (1689), pp. 296-298

<sup>529</sup> M.F. Guillén, *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical: Scientific Management and the Rise of Modernist Architecture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006

family are disenchanted. Many taboos are weakened in the process of modernization and relations become more objects of choice rather than adherence to a natural order through ritual. As Anthony Giddens states: “Modes of behavior and feeling associated with sexual and marital life have become mobile, unsettled and ‘open’. (...) “A child in a stepfamily may have two mothers and fathers, two sets of brothers and sisters, together with other complex connections resulting from the multiple marriages of parents.”<sup>530</sup>

This interpretation ties in with how Manuel Castells describes what he calls the Network Society.<sup>531</sup> Its space is first of all characterized by a material infrastructure of the circuit of electronic exchanges (telecommunications, computers, broadcasting systems, ICT-based high-speed infrastructure). What characterizes this space further is the existence of nodes and hubs. These can be crucial places and this way could be described as meaningful, but what has to be seen here is that in the network society, and as nodes and hubs, they derive their meaning from the network as a whole. There is nothing inherently meaningful to these places as they are defined by their central location in the flows of the network. Their meaning derives from their coordinates. The emptying of space, disconnecting it from an inherent meaning at a certain locality, is enacted in the world of the managerial elite of this society. Just as the supermarket bundles goods anywhere, so this elite has a world of international hotels, airport VIP-lounges, travel arrangements, secretarial support and high-class restaurants that supersedes local specificity.

What this amounts to is what Castells calls the “space of flows” which prevails over the “space of places”. Whereas in a place, meaning is contained within physical contiguity, self-contained meaning is dissolved in the space of flows. The grand infrastructure projects of modernization and the planning of new cities operate in homogenous space or under the condition that Rem Koolhaas speaks of as “de-localization”.<sup>532</sup>

A similar shift takes place in the field of the state and its institutions. We discerned a general trend towards rationalization and bureaucratization of the state in the first chapter. In the modern state, the background orientation is transformed and the state is conceptualized differently. The bureaucratization of the state implies the rise of extensive archives, statistics, planning agencies, calculation rooms and overall a quantification of society. The Weberian principles of bureaucracy, standardization, filing, clear hierarchies represent a neutralization of the state. The regime of modern democracy, part of modernity’s total package and the crown on Modernization Theory, can also be interpreted in this light.

Pre-modern polities were often conceptualized as following some form of preordained order or reflecting some meaningful principle in the world that merits a certain form of human

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<sup>530</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, pp. 12-13

<sup>531</sup> M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society (Second Edition)*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000 (1996), pp. 440-448

<sup>532</sup> Idem, pp. 452-459

behavior in the political sphere. This is why pre-modern politics consisted for a great degree of ritual. Many rulers had full day-tasks with performing ceremonies. The sense of idleness or futility that we feel when we reflect about this brings our different experience of the world to light. It is because the natural world is neutral or indifferent with regard to human affairs for us that such ceremonies seem pointless. It is from an experience that there are meaningful structures in the natural world that have a bearing on human behavior that the ceremonies make sense. In classical China for instance, natural disasters like floods or drought were interpreted as signs that the emperor had lost the Mandate of Heaven. And if an emperor had this mandate, it was believed that by performing the right rituals and even by standing in the right positions, he could set the empire straight. Another example of the experience of the world as having an inherent order to which politics must conform, is the old Mayan belief that human sacrifices were necessary to ward off the destruction of the world. Although Veblen was very perceptive of the force of ritual by high classes, he did not manage to relate this to the different experiences of the world. Against the background of a neutral world, he has to interpret these rituals as dealing purely with power and social distinction rather than being able to see how they were also the answer to an experience of a certain order in the world.<sup>533</sup> Modern democracy on the other hand belongs to a world that is neutralized. Politics is not a reflection of a preordained order in the natural world, but instead is about the *will* of the people. And for radical democratic theorists the extension of this will is unrestricted, i.e. there is no order that bounds it.

The experience of the world as having an inherent order that is meaningful for us also related to the dimension of time. In the pre-modern world, tradition orders time, this way restricting the openness to counterfactual futures. This is because the world is as it is because it is as it should be. The past inserts authenticated practice into the future. When time is emptied, the future is conceived as being more open and counterfactual reasoning becomes important.<sup>534</sup>

This experience of loss of a sense of an inherent meaningful order in the world is greatly expressed by the poet John Donne. He relates it to the rise of modern philosophy, to which we have also made reference as articulations of the modern experience of the world. In Donne's words:

And new Philosophy calls all in doubt,  
 The Element of fire is quite put out;  
 The Sun is lost, and th' earth, and no mans wit  
 Can well direct him, where to look for it.<sup>535</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> T. Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*

<sup>534</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 48

<sup>535</sup> J. Donne, *An Anatomy of the World: The First Anniversary*, Cambridge: Roxburghe Club, 1951 (1611) . The influence of modern thought on this process was also expressed by Sigmund Freud, who saw his own thought as

The first constitutive element of the impact of modernity on the human condition is thus an experience and conceptualization of the world as neutral or as raw material. In the analysis it became clear that this is connected with another pole or constitutive element, namely the human subject. As the world is neutralized and no longer has an inherent meaning, the subject becomes the source of meaning and value in modernity. This became clear in the phenomena we looked at. Whereas pre-modern politics is more ritualistic as it follows some form of worldly or divine order, modern democracy finds its source of value in the will of the people. Global markets neutralized the world by turning it into homogenous objects without a natural place, making the desires of people the source of their value. Socio-demographically, encompassing environments give way to the choice of individuals.

Throughout the unfolding of modernity, human subjectivity has risen to prominence. It is a force that is implicit in capitalist markets, participative politics and urbanization. Over the last decades it has extended further. The social revolution of the sixties enhanced the influence of individual choice in politics and society. Subsequently, according to Christopher Lasch, the personal sphere has become the prime preoccupation of people, which he goes on to describe as narcissism. From the utopian social aspirations of the sixties, the focus in contemporary life has shrunk to the personal sphere:

Having no hope of improving their lives in any of the ways that matter, people have convinced themselves that what matters is psychic self-improvement: getting in touch with their feelings, eating health food, taking lessons in ballet or belly-dancing, immersing themselves in the wisdom of the East, jogging, learning how to “relate”, overcoming the “fear of pleasure”.<sup>536</sup>

Lasch’s extreme pessimism is also typical of the late seventies and early eighties, but he does describe the strong contemporary development of a focus on the self as the source of meaning. Psychologist Kenneth J. Gergen describes how in our age the self in different versions (with romantic and modernist impulses) becomes the source of meaning.<sup>537</sup> Philosopher Ad Verbrugge has described the phenomenon he calls “impression solipsism”<sup>538</sup>.

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the ‘third insult’ after Galileo placed the earth out of the universe’s center and Darwin dethroned man as the crown of Creation.

<sup>536</sup> C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in An Age of Diminishing Expectations*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991 (1979), p. 4

<sup>537</sup> K.J. Gergen, *The Saturated Self*, New York: Basic Books, 2000. We will return to this author in the next chapter.

<sup>538</sup> A.M. Verbrugge, *Tijd van onbehagen: Filosofische essays over een cultuur op drift*, Amsterdam: SUN, 2004, pp. 32-39

Both Lasch and Verbrugge also describe how this phenomenon is related to the rise of the social type of the manager. It is a social type that in contrast with the entrepreneur has a free-floating existence and whose actions are strongly tied to his image or “imago”. The new executive wants to maintain, as Lasch cites, “an illusion of limitless options”<sup>539</sup>.

As the world loses its inherent meaning in modernity, the human subject becomes the source of value and meaning. But what drives this rise of the subject? Can we elucidate how this expanding subjectivity is experienced? What is it that happens when a traditional community is exposed to the shops and markets of modernity? It is also the question of what the light is that draws people to television shows and the internet and why the type of the manager exerts such an appeal on people. Can we decipher what the attracting force is of this constitutive element of modernity?

There is a certain experience of the self that runs through the diverse phenomena of modernity which gives them their attractive force and which motivates people to enter deeper into the world of modernity. This is what I would call a “magical theory of modernity” and we find a hint of it in the work of the early modern philosopher René Descartes. Descartes was schooled in the classical philosophy of scholasticism, but he recognized the shattering influence of modern science and thought on the classical world view. In contemporary mathematics coordinates in empty space are still described as the Cartesian coordinate system. The sense of a great rupture led Descartes to embark on his project of radical doubt. From the classical world view he glimpsed the modern world and seeking to find its foundations, he poignantly formulated a vision of the future. In his *Discours de la méthode*, he spoke of the possibility of man becoming like a “master and possessor of nature”.<sup>540</sup> It is a formulation that gives us an insight into the driving force of modernity. Descartes does not formulate his vision here in terms of an alleviation from toil, which of course is one goal of modern technological innovation. Seeing the radical nature of the rupture, he also does not speak of an uncertain incremental movement. Rather, he formulates his vision in terms of the fantasy of all-might. Nature is the raw material that man can come to possess. What alternative theories of modernity might focus on is the creation of ease and comfort or a process of incremental trial and error. What such theories miss is the extent to which modernity represents a radical rupture as in its core is the powerful energy of a vision that is highly seductive.

What I want to propose here is to interpret this conceptualization of the self in modernity as the fantasy of bringing the age-old figure of the magician into reality. It is a figure that rises above nature and the toil nature asks from us. By unlocking her secrets, the magician becomes the master and possessor of nature. Through a ‘trick’, nature comes to work for the magician

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<sup>539</sup> C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*, p. 44. Another author who of course also focused on the modern type of the manager is Alisdair MacIntyre. Parallel to our investigation, he placed the manager in the context of the emotivism of our age. A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory (Second Edition)*, London: Duckworth, 1985 (1981), pp. 25-27

<sup>540</sup> R. Descartes, ‘Discours de la methode’ (1637), in: *Œuvres philosophiques I*, edited by F. Alquié, Paris: Dunod, 1997, p. 634 (my translation)

without the hard effort that is required in daily life.<sup>541</sup> Of course in the pre-modern age, this figure was imaginative. With the advent of modernity, a force comes into the world that emanates the feeling that this imaginative figure can be actualized. The newly emerging economy, but specifically modern technology, creates an experience of being released from the strains of nature and of making her work for us. The means through which this is done have changed and it is made possible because the means are now rational. Nature's secrets are not unlocked through a mystical book of nature, but by modern science and technology. Interpreting modernity from this perspective sheds light on the fascination in the early modern age with alchemy (by figures like Isaac Newton) as well as with witchcraft. It also sheds light on the recurrent story of *Faust* in Western history. Indeed, for Oswald Spengler the story goes to the core of Western culture.

A further important contribution to this interpretation of modernity can be found in the work of Leon Trotsky. Also writing in a revolutionary age, he too sought to gauge the grand transformation that was taking place. Although he adhered to a future proletarian revolution that did not come about, he did have great insight in the driving forces of modernity. As the world comes to be raw material, man achieves a creative force over it:

(...) mankind will educate itself plastically, it will become accustomed to look at the world as submissive clay for sculpting the most perfect forms of life. The wall between art and industry will come down. The great style of the future will be formative, not ornamental. Here the Futurists are right. But it would be wrong to look at this as a liquidating of art, as a voluntary giving way to technique.<sup>542</sup>

The neutralization of the world we described in the previous section thus goes together with the rise of man as its master who has the power to manipulate it. Through technical means, man is inspired by the vision of the all-might of the magician. To be more precise, in contrast with the traditional magician, through technology, the *means* of acting have become transparent. But the *aims* pursued in the projects of the modern world tie in with the classical fantasy of the magician. As a result of modern technological means, much of the magical fantasies can be realized, like human flight and action at a distance, whereas others remain merely as a horizon of aspiration.

The nineteenth-century English entrepreneur, colonizer and politician Cecil Rhodes comes to mind in this context, who stated: "to think of these stars that you see overhead at night, these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could. I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and yet so far."

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<sup>541</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Jenaer Systementwürfe III: Naturphilosophie und Philosophie des Geistes*, Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1997 (1805-6), p. 206-207

<sup>542</sup> L. Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005 (1925), pp. 202-203



*Nineteenth-century caricature of Cecil Rhodes' plan to connect Cairo with Cape Town through railway and telegraph*<sup>543</sup>



Another passage from Trotsky more clearly expresses this link between modernity and the age-old fantasy of magic:

*Faith merely promises to move mountains; but technology, which takes nothing “on faith”, is actually able to cut down mountains and move them. (...) Man will occupy himself with re-registering mountains and rivers, and will earnestly and repeatedly make improvements in nature. In the end, he will have rebuilt the earth, if not in his own image, at least according to his own taste.*<sup>544</sup>

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<sup>543</sup> Source: R.C. Gibbons, *Exploring History 1400-1900: An anthology of primary sources*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, p. 401. Although interest for the project has over time resurfaced, the railway is still not there.

<sup>544</sup> L. Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, p. 204 (my italics). Inherent in Technopolis is this fantasy of total control and rebuilding the earth. Much of what Trotsky here describes has materialized, but it has to be noted

The magic that faith imaginatively promises, is realized by modern technology. We will come back to the transformation and “rebuilding” of the earth below, but for our purposes here it is also important to note that man’s taste becomes the measure of all things.

This reasoning seems to contradict what we said above about modernity as disenchantment. Modernity does indeed represent a disenchantment as Max Weber argued. However, what is argued here is that Weber was only ‘half right’. The world is disenchanted, but at the same time mankind is ‘re-enchanted’ in modernity. As the world becomes the neutral material or “clay”, man becomes the magician who shapes and yields over it.

What does this magical theory of modernity mean for our understanding of the phenomenology of modernity? A first case we can look at through this lens is the introduction of modern forces in more traditional communities. What is it that rural or nomadic tribes of in-land Africa, Latin America or Asia experience when they are confronted with modern shops, department stores and supermarkets? What makes this new force everywhere so irresistible? I would suggest that modern goods are experienced as magical apparitions that lift the human subject out of his environment. Traditional clothing, food and artifacts clearly show their natural origin. They are directly experienced in connection with the effort and toil that goes into their creation. Modern goods hide their origins and present a way out of the strenuous interaction with nature from which a small surplus is created. Desires buried by their impossibility are brought to life by the apparition of these modern goods. Released from the ritual that surrounds traditional production, modern markets create goods ‘at will’. They give a sense of power over nature, becoming her master and possessor, that before seemed incredible and dangerous.

Outside of these highly secluded communities, we found globally a process of urbanization in the course of modernization. Moving from villages to cities implies a change in the relation to a range of goods. In rural areas, food is predominantly produced locally and it is thus embedded in the natural environment. City-dwellers who do not produce their own food have a different relation to it. From the directly prepared goods of the natural environment, the national and global markets that supply the supermarkets do this in the form of branded goods. Not only do they order goods in homogenous space for the individual subject, but these goods are processed, packaged and branded. This goes together with the ubiquity of advertising in cities. Brands of food, clothing and other consumer goods are presented to people through the images of advertising. Instead of animals and plants that are more unconsciously part of the living environment, advertising seeks to isolate the attention of the human subject on it. Billboards and commercials are ‘pop-ups’ designed to be transparent and clear so that they relate directly to the individual’s will. To paraphrase Arthur Schopenhauer, the world is made into a representation at the disposal of the will. Goods are related to, not as

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here that human control is far from complete of course. Natural disasters, epidemics and inadequate models go against this assertion of control. The tsunami and floods that recently caused the crisis at the Fukushima reactor are a case in point. An investigation of the practical limits to control goes beyond the reach of our study here. What we focus on here is the tendency towards and aspiration of magical control in modernity.

elements of an embedded environment, but as images that seek to penetrate our consciousness. They seek to implant a fantasy that lifts us out of our current situation. Their magical quality can be gauged from the affinity of advertising with hypnosis or being mesmerized. Advertisements do not sell the fulfillment of physical needs, but the belief that all that is desirable is at the disposal of individual choice.

The fantasy of the magical manipulation of the world also sheds light on the figure of the manager that emerged over the last decades. The contemporary manager is to be contrasted with the “organization man” of the nineteen-fifties, who was characterized by a stable, mechanical and bureaucratic character. The contemporary manager on the other hand is much more mobile, moving between companies on the basis of his imago. The corporate manager is famed for his style, “power consists not of money and influence, but of “momentum”, a “winning image”, a reputation as a winner”<sup>545</sup>. Modernity is the realization of the figure of the magician and the manager is one of its most potent embodiments. The companies and sectors through which he moves and the goods they produce are homogenous material on which he puts his special touch. It is his mysterious quality to work miracles and shape everything according to his vision and will that define the manager. The superstition in management books on hazy phenomena like momentum, charms and the use of ‘spells’ to motivate oneself make the manager a contemporary magician.<sup>546</sup>

The subject as the source of value, as a magician manipulating the environment, is a force that runs through the modern media. The subsequent development of new types of media have made space and time homogenous by breaking down their limits. Developments from across the globe are not only accessible, but they are accessible in real time. Simultaneously we can watch what happens anywhere. Moreover, especially with the digital media, communication and information are increasingly organized according to the choice of the viewer. This creates in Castells’ words “a temporal collage, where not only genres are mixed, but their timing becomes synchronous in a flat horizon, with no beginning, no end, no sequence”<sup>547</sup>. By making everything synchronous, news, communication, entertainment are taken out of any internal order that organizes their presentation and instead are organized according to the desires of the subject. The classical encyclopedia was already a medium through which pieces of information were isolated and simultaneously presented to the individual. It served, as Diderot argued, to “gather all the knowledge that lies scattered over the earth”. However, the classical encyclopedia still had some form of internal order, organizing information in alphabetical order. The digital encyclopedia dispenses with this order and is organized to attach to the impulses of the reader directly. From the science of links, i.e. improving the algorithm that establishes their relevance to the human mind, to the dispensation of the

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<sup>545</sup> C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*, pp. 46-47

<sup>546</sup> Alisdair MacIntyre also gives an insightful investigation of the modern type of the manager. His critique of the manager’s acclaimed rationality parallels our discussion of the type in terms of the magician. A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, London: Duckworth, 1985 (1981), pp. 88-108

<sup>547</sup> M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, p. 492

keyboard and the mouse in the touch screen, the distance between desire and image is continuously shortened.<sup>548</sup> The media thus harness and spread the force of subjectivity or the fantasy of all-might in which the world is at our disposal. From this phenomenological account we can supplement the dynamic we described in chapter I. There we described how capitalism and socio-demographic change lead to political change in the direction of democracy. From our macro-perspective, we elucidated this causality through the formation of a middle class. We can now understand this development from a more internal perspective. Shopping malls and supermarkets, the billboards of city-life and the internet all emanate the unleashing of subjectivity. They foster an experience of the world as objects at the disposal of the will. They make the experience of individual choice omnipresent in daily life, which serves as the foundation for democratic politics.

The magical forces of ICT have their origins in Silicon Valley in the San Francisco Bay Area. Not far along the same west coast of the United States is Los Angeles, the other powerful driving force in the media of our time. Jean Baudrillard has focused in particular on the centrality of Disneyland for understanding our contemporary world.<sup>549</sup> With its illusions and phantasms, it is a world created around the experience of magic. The fantasies are at one's disposal and are there to serve the fulfillment of making the impossible real. Emblematic in this sense is the 1940 Walt Disney film *Fantasia*, with Micky Mouse in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* series. The world of Disney exemplifies the enchantment and magnetism at the heart of modernity. Outside of the City of Angels, other theme parks tie into this theme with names like Enchanted Village and Magic Mountain. Furthermore, the film studios of Hollywood, Los Angeles, have built an economy around the production of stages and scenarios to serve as representations for individual subjects around the world.

From these dynamics, we can indeed say that the world is 'California Dreaming' as this state is so central to the realization of the figure of the magician in our time (possibly making it the capital of the world we describe as Technopolis).<sup>550</sup>

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<sup>548</sup> By combining ICT with neurology this distance could be shortened even further, possibly in the future making the image appear split seconds before the desire. The urge for further technological innovations is present in the experience of 'impatience with the 'gravity' of using digital programs.

<sup>549</sup> J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010 (1994), pp. 12-13. For Baudrillard, Disneyland serves to hide by its specific localization that the world around it is also Disneyland. Below we will look at the dynamic of reality and 'simulation' in Technopolis. Here we will interpret Disneyland in the light of our thesis on the magical quality of modernity.

<sup>550</sup> Symbolically speaking, the bankruptcy of the state of California sheds light on the current manifestation of Technopolis, to which we will return in chapter V.

## *Detachment or Disembedding as the Way of Relating*

Up to now we have seen that in modernity the world is transformed into neutral objects in empty time and space and the self or subject becomes the source of value and meaning. Here we will focus more specifically on the *way of relating*, or stance, that comes together with this sense of world and self. In modernity, we come to relate to the world and ourselves in a specific way that we will characterize as detachment. In our discussion up to now, we have in various instances seen how detachment is realized when human subjects stand against a neutral world that is at their disposal. From the previous two constitutive elements of modernity, our way of relating to our natural environment (as food, goods or houses for instance), as well as to our social environment (in cities, modern families) and our self becomes detached. In the cases we looked at we saw that in the process of modernization people were lifted out of their direct environment and placed into larger encompassing systems. Another term we will use for detachment comes from the work of Anthony Giddens, who describes a process of disembedding in modernity, to which we will turn now.

Comparable to our analysis, Giddens describes disembedding as “the “lifting out” of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space”<sup>551</sup>. This restructuring is done in abstract systems, which Giddens divides into symbolic tokens and expert systems. Money is an example of a symbolic token to which we will return to more elaborately in the next part of this section. Above we have also discussed the influence of capitalist markets on life in modernity. There we described their detaching dynamic. We can add to that here that in recent decades the relationship between capital and labor has increasingly come to fall under this dynamic. As Castells describes, capital is in essence global, whereas labor is at core local. This way, capital and labor have more and more come to exist in different spaces and times.<sup>552</sup> So while labor is done locally and thus in a particular environment, it is greatly under the influence of the abstract system of global capital, but we will return to this later. Expert systems consist of specialized knowledge and expertise that people not only consult more in modernity, but which permeate everyone’s daily life. One clear example is the modern state and its institutions that we discerned in the first chapter. Bureaucratization entails the penetration of centralized and monitoring systems in daily life in forms like registrations, ownership rights, permits, social security and legal status. Local activity is in modernity thus increasingly lifted out of the direct environment and placed within abstract systems through which it is detached or disembedded. These abstract systems that permeate life have a bearing on how people relate to their environment and to themselves. Aside from living in detached or disembedded structures, people also relate in detached or disembedded manner.

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<sup>551</sup> A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009 (1990), p. 21

<sup>552</sup> M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network*, p. 506

We can approach this way of relating inherent in modernity through the influence of reflexivity in life. Many sociologists from Anthony Giddens to Ulrich Beck and Zygmunt Bauman see in this phenomenon a core feature of modernity. Reflecting over direct experience and the monitoring of our own behavior is a part of human nature and is present in all societies. People always have taken a reflexive stance towards for instance the way they appear to others around them, but also religion has been a primary source of the monitoring of one's self. In modernity however, this phenomenon has been greatly amplified and changed in character. Rather than priests or parents, whose language derives from everyday experience, the abstract language of expert systems becomes the source of reflexivity in modernity.

The general movement towards city life and the increase in media consumption in the form of books, newspapers, magazines and commercials lead to a reflexive stance in which people and things are related to through the abstract and detached lens of expert systems.

Next to a knowledge that derives from personal experience, a wide range of fields come to fall under the category of things of which we know 'what is going on' through input from the media. Expert languages can come from the field of science. This is for instance the case with our relationship to nutrition. Food items are packaged but also advertised on the basis of their biochemical ingredients. Fruits and dairy products are sold because of the presence of antioxidants, a certain vitamin or calcium, ingredients that cannot be seen or experienced directly. Rather than being part of a natural environment and its rhythms, nutrition is related to as types of resources for the metabolic system. Thus both the object (nutrition) and the self (the body) are related to from an outside perspective that is detached from direct experience.

Turning more directly to the way of relating to the self, we can discern the influence of other expert systems. A vast literature has emerged in the field of self-help or mental health. It is through the language of therapists as well as the captains of industry that the self is related to in this literature. Their words and concepts have spread to everyday experience in which people speak of suppression and denial and worry over psychic security, as well as use tactics of survival, practice in self-assertiveness and do sensitivity training. Relating to the self from the conceptual scheme of specialized fields, its character can be characterized as disembedded.

More broadly speaking, these phenomena can be related to the increasing presence of the confessional mode. In literature, in social help groups and from diaries to contemporary social networks, (therapeutic) confession permeates everyday life in modernity. In the confession, self-disclosure serves to achieve a distance from the self. One takes a view that is detached from the self. As Lasch argues on writing about oneself: "The mere act of writing already presupposes a certain detachment from the self; and the objectification of one's own experience".<sup>553</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*, p. 17

The same way of relating can be discerned in the hedonism that arose since the nineteen-sixties and in particular to the sexual liberation it brought. Originally this was conceived as a liberation from the detached structures of bureaucratic organization in order to find the self behind the alienating structures. However, we can find the same pattern of detachment in modern sexual liberation. From the sixties on, sexuality was taken out of the sphere of play and its obscurity and brought into the light. Like a religious calling in earlier times, sexuality in the world of popular artists and rights activists became the object of a public confession. Madonna's later flirt with Christ in her public appearances is in this sense a sexualized "I stand here, I cannot do otherwise". Taken out of the realm of obscurity, confessed, and made the object of scrutiny, sexuality comes to serve exploration and the right to satisfaction. Obscure play is made into the conscious effort to get proper "technique": "(...) play is now "measured by standards of achievement previously applicable only to work" ".<sup>554</sup> Becoming a technique with standards of achievement, the own body and the other person are 'objectified' as they are put to work. Instead of the specificity of the persons involved, an outside view is taken from which feelings are manipulated to achieve the proper body mechanics. We can see this too in the field of pornography, which represents about a quarter of all internet queries. Although infused with the most personal of feelings, it represents a form of detachment rather than a step closer to the self. Driven out of its previous obscurity, it is not experienced in the first person, but through the third person perspective of the camera. As such, it has an effect on the experience of sexuality. The common phenomenon among the youth to film the deed with mobile phones exhibits a transformation. The camera is not external to the deed, but much private sexuality has from the outset become a porn movie.

This is why Michel Foucault saw in the sexual revolution not a liberation from, but an extension of the disciplining of the body in modernity. It is a continuation of the religious confession that from the outside overlooked the totality of life from the perspective of sexuality.

From these phenomena it should be clear that when we speak of detachment this does not mean an unemotional or cold stance. These phenomena are highly emotionally charged. Detachment refers to the outside perspective through which human activity is lifted outside of its local environment. The stance is disembedded, because people abstract from their local involvement.<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> M. Wolfenstein as quoted in: C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*, p. 65

<sup>555</sup> Forces of re-appropriation and re-embedding can also be discerned in the use of such modern technologies. This will be a topic in Chapter V when we bring the forces of Technopolis and Embeddedness together.

### 3). The Dynamic of Technopolis

We can now proceed more directly to decipher what the general impact of modernity is on the human condition and understand what life in modernity means. In the previous three parts of this section we looked at the constitutive parts or moments of modernity. As the world is transformed into neutral material in empty space and time, the subject becomes the magical source of value and meaning and the way of relating of modernity can be characterized as detached or disembedded. As they are moments of a singular process, we saw considerable overlap in our discussion of these three parts. It was relevant however to analyze them separately to gain a clearer understanding of the overall process. Now we will take these moments together and understand them as a singular force.

From a more static discussion of the constitutive elements, by taking them together we can come to an understanding of the dynamic of modernity. Taken as a singular force, what is overarching effect of the process of modernization? As modernity unfolds, what is the direction of its impact on the human condition?

The driving force we will discern is in the direction of the world we call Technopolis. As we shall see, it can take on quite different forms, but the argument here is that we can discern a vision that in these different forms runs through the whole process of modernization. This vision is present in Descartes' formulation of becoming masters and possessors of nature right through to our time. We define this vision of Technopolis as *the radical and permanent reorganization and transformation of everything according to the dictates of subjectivity*. As a polis, it is a form of human living together that is constituted by technē. The specific technologies we surveyed at the outset of this chapter are the preconditions for this form of living together, but, as mentioned, we are interested here in the impact on the human condition, or the stance of modernity rather than these specific technologies themselves. It is a technological stance (that radically and permanently reorganizes and transforms) rather than technology itself that "techno" refers to. We use the term "polis" here to convey the visionary or dream-like character of modernity as in words like 'cosmopolitan' or in dystopian versions like Fritz Lange's *Metropolis* or Lewis Mumford's *Necropolis*. As the vision at the heart of modernity, it is a unifying and directive force, but we must be careful not to reify it. It is not a separate entity, but a dynamic and active force in human affairs.

We can gain an intimation of the world of Technopolis by returning to the quoted passage from Trotsky. Above we emphasized the connection between technology and faith to bring out the magical force of subjectivity. Here it is important to emphasize the transformation of the world this results in: "Man will occupy himself with re-registering mountains and rivers, and will earnestly and repeatedly make improvements in nature. In the end, he will have rebuilt the earth, if not in his own image, at least according to his own taste". This transformation too is connected with the world of faith and particularly Christianity by making the comparison with the Biblical God who made the man in his image. The passage conveys the missionary character of Technopolis. As in a strong stand in Christianity, where



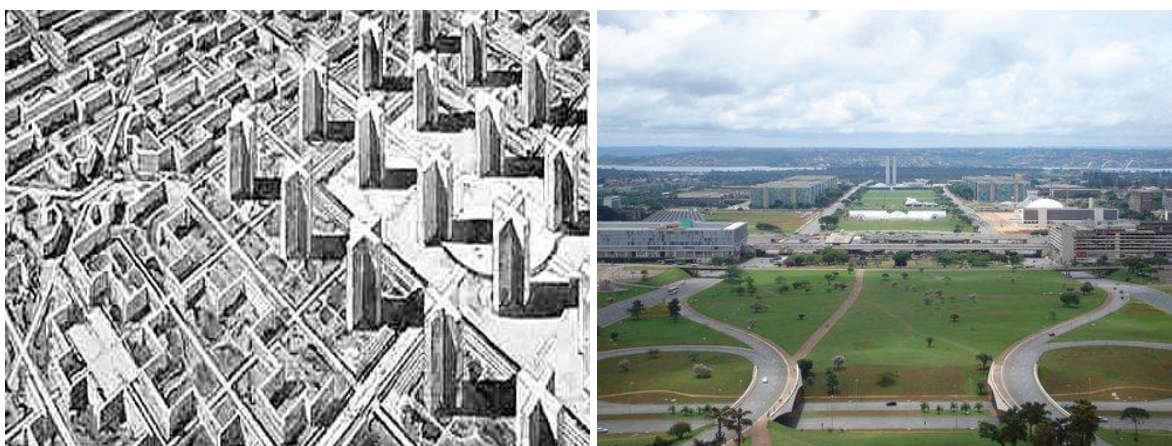
the world and the flesh have to be repressed and transformed to bring them to salvation, Technopolis also follows the imperative to take nothing as it is.

From the outset, modernity has been accompanied by utopian visions of a paradisiacal state. From Thomas More's *Utopia* and the millenarianism of the French Revolution, this dream has accompanied modern politics. A common later example of the dream of an utopian End State is of course communism. Especially after its demise, authors have argued that utopian visions are a thing of the past. Postmodernism implies the end of grand narratives and ideological battle. Although there is a truth to this and ideological battle has lost most of its vitality, we have to note that this does not imply the demise of the missionary and transformative character of modern politics. A large part of worldwide democratization and rights movements testify to the salvatory character of politics. And while no longer under the banner of an ideology like socialism, we still seek to continuously transform the world. Probably to a greater extent than ever, technology and markets are mobilized to banish poverty, disease and other impediments to human freedom and development.

In this section we will discuss the radical and permanent reorganization and transformation of everything in two parts. First we will turn to how this dynamic of Technopolis applies to our natural environment, after which we will look at its impact on self and society.

#### *A). The Technopolitical Transformation of the Environment*

A first field in which we can see the technopolitical transformation is the house or other forms of human dwelling. We have discussed the emptying of space in modernity to order it according to the desires of subjects. Specifically we looked at Modernist architecture as an example of this phenomenon. The technopolitical stance is summed up in Le Corbusier's remark that "houses are machines for living in". Le Corbusier had grand plans and even wanted to destroy the traditional center of Paris to recreate it. A particularly incisive example of this type of architecture is however found in the city of Brasilia, a creation of his students Lucio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer. The building of the new city that was to serve as the country's capital was the idea of president Juscelino Kubitschek. The city is a quintessential technopolitical structure. It is characterized by wide open spaces, tremendously vast avenues, grand highways and high buildings. It is divided by the geometrical lines of empty space and from the air the center has the shape of a tremendous airplane. The city is not the outcome of local decisions, growing over centuries around inhabited places, but is the result of a radical and planned transformation of the environment, in which people had to be fitted afterwards.



The city of Brasilia is an extreme example of modern urban planning around the world. Another way we can see Technopolis at work in the field of housing relates to a development we described in the first chapter on universal modernization. What we described there from a social-science perspective can now be interpreted existentially.

We saw that developing countries that are starting to modernize do not necessarily lack property.<sup>557</sup> Pre-modern societies also knew private property as well as markets to trade goods. What they often do lack is the capacity to transform property into capital, which requires a unified and formal regulatory framework. Through such a framework, the potential value of for instance a house can be estimated and transformed into capital by becoming the collateral for a mortgage.

Through the regulatory framework, the physical object that is used for dwelling can then be 'described' in expert systems and subsequently be compared to other houses, through which it gets a value on the financial market. Through different 'descriptions', like property rights, stocks and contracts, the physical object can be cast into a potential value (capital). Put differently, the house also comes to exist in the world of quantitative symbols. And as a mortgage, a house can become the basis for economic enterprise.

In this process of capitalization, property also becomes more accessible and fungible. As a paper (or electronic) description, property can be combined, divided, transported and used without any local involvement. Whereas in pre-modern societies, estates or businesses usually had to be physically partitioned amongst the children of the owner, it now becomes possible to divide and trade them in immaterial markets. It is thus central to modern economics that

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<sup>556</sup> [http://cdn.wn.com/pd/99/4f/06805af25023339d6fef7cba6233\\_grande.jpg](http://cdn.wn.com/pd/99/4f/06805af25023339d6fef7cba6233_grande.jpg)

<http://i41.photobucket.com/albums/e288/FJJC/brasilia-airplane.png>

<sup>557</sup> H. De Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, New York: Basic Books, 2000, until p. 65. Discussed in section I.C.

property goods like houses are detached from their personal and physical existence. Whereas the house where people are brought up in is emotionally charged and has a meaning that is not transferable, its existence in the modern economy is transferable. Thus next to our everyday experience of the house, it gains an existence in an abstract sphere that our eyes cannot see and it can be manipulated without anyone's hands touching it. The house that in everyday life has a unique sphere of its own in which the inhabitants are sheltered and nourished is transformed and mobilized as capital in Technopolis. Its unique properties are neutralized in the neutral sphere of technical description so that it comes to stand at the disposal of human subjectivity.

This 'second life' of houses is achieved through their capitalization on financial markets. The global financial markets are perhaps the quintessential manifestation of Technopolis in their dynamic of objectifying the world and transforming it into an object of permanent manipulation. We will return to this in a moment.

Another element of our everyday environment that we have been looking at in this chapter is nutrition. As neutral objects for human use, food has in modernity become part of Technopolis' permanent reorganization and transformation of the world. Of course, food has been 'processed' throughout human history.<sup>558</sup> However, it is with the modern age that the dream of liberating food from nature is made real. By using cans, freezing food and vacuum-packing it, food was in an unprecedented scale liberated or detached from nature's cycles of scarcity and abundance, as well from the way in which it was tied to specific seasons and localities. In earlier times, food strongly tied humanity to these natural cycles to which people had to be attentive. This relationship was expressed in elaborate rituals like earth veneration and fertility cults. Through the technical manipulation of nature's raw material, the meaning of our food has been to a great extent detached from natural cycles and instead is modified to appear at our desire. Author Michael Pollan argues that after the Second World War another phase of food processing started, which went beyond liberating food from nature.<sup>559</sup> In a Trotskyian vein, the goal then became to improve on nature. In this phase butter was replaced by margarine, fruit juice by juice drinks as well as sweet drinks without any fruit in them. Additives were applied for color and taste, as well as to add nutrients like vitamins and minerals. This is, according to Pollan, all based on the reductionist premise, that food is nothing more than the sum of its nutrients, which can be isolated and reassembled into meals. The dynamic of food processing illustrates the general dynamic of Technopolis. Nature is rendered into the sum of raw materials that have no inherent meaning or place and that can be mobilized and reorganized to fulfill human needs. As Slavoj Žižek states, the market now

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<sup>558</sup> The use of fire was an important step in this direction. It has even been argued by B. Wrangham (*Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human*, New York: Basic Books, 2009) that the use of fire played an important part in making us human, both physically as well as socially. Another important step has been the methods of keeping food from spoilage by using salt, dry, cure, and pickle. In these early developments, food is changed so as accommodate it better to our living circumstances.

<sup>559</sup> M. Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: The Search for a Perfect Meal in a Fast-Food World*, London: Bloomsbury, 2006, pp. 90-99

offers goods without their substance: “coffee without caffeine, cream without fat, beer without alcohol”.<sup>560</sup>

The untraceability for average consumers of many products in the supermarket illustrate the disembedding process and how any natural order is pushed outside of our scope. Nature is objectified into consumer goods that are sold as nutrients, quantities of material that we relate to in a detached way. The giant supply chains behind the products are hidden in a technical interior that pushes out nature.

The detached way of relating runs right through to the farms from which our food originates. Of course, farmers that sold their produce have always sought to create high yields and profits and used technologies to achieve this. The modern farm however stands closer to an industrial plant than to a traditional farm. Whereas corn used to be measured, to a wide variety of qualities next to yield and the sacks bore the name of the farmer who produced them, today a large part of corn production is for commodity markets in which it is traded as a good with universal neutral qualities. It is the raw input for further modification in factory farms and processing plants and what these farmers produce is of itself hardly edible. It is an industrial raw material and like the house represented as a mortgage it is an abstraction. Our relation to the stockpiles of corn stands very far from how Friar Sahugan in the sixteenth century described how the Mayas related to it:

If they saw dry grains of maize scattered on the ground, they quickly gathered them up, saying “Our sustenance suffereth, it lieth weeping. If we should not gather it up, it would accuse us before our Lord. It would say, ‘O, Our Lord, his vassal picked me not up when I lay scattered upon the ground. Punish him!’ Or perhaps we should starve”.<sup>561</sup>

It is worth quoting another passage from Michael Pollan’s work on how our modern way of relating applies to cattle. Standing in front of a cow, labeled number 534, who has been bred to feed on corn rather than on grass, he states:

One way of looking at 534 – the feedlot way, the industrial way – was as a most impressive machine for turning number 2 field corn into cuts of beef. Every day between now and his slaughter in six months, 534 will convert thirty-two pounds of feed into four pounds of gain – new muscle, fat and bone. This is at least how 534 appears in the computer program I’d seen at the mill: the ratio of feed to gain that determines his efficiency. (...) (It) is indeed a factory, transforming – as fast as bovinely possible – cheap raw materials into a less cheap finished product, through the mechanism of bovine metabolism.<sup>562</sup>

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<sup>560</sup> S. Zizek, *The Universal Exception*, London: Continuum, 2006, p. 269

<sup>561</sup> Quoted from M. Pollan, *The omnivore’s dilemma*, p. 58

<sup>562</sup> Idem, pp. 80-81

We can step aside here for a moment to see how the dynamic of Technopolis that we find in these phenomena was already articulated in early modern philosophy of John Locke. In his thought we find a detached relationship to the environment as for him it had no inherent meaning: “Nature and the Earth furnished only the almost worthless Materials, as in themselves”. Furthermore, not only did he view man as the source of value, but value is realized by labor, or the transformation of nature’s raw materials. In his estimation nine-tenth or even ninety-nine-one-hundreth of something’s value comes from “human industry”. As he continues: “For whatever *Bread* is more worth than Acorns, *Wine* than Water, and *Cloth* or *Silk* than Leaves, Skins, or Moss, that is wholly *owing to labour* and industry.”<sup>563</sup> Nature is thus material at our disposal. Humanity’s shaping capacity bestows value, a process through which the world is reorganized and transformed. For Locke, uncultivated land is waste. In his work, we find an early articulation of the experience of life in modern capitalism. Again, Trotsky provides insightful formulations that continue along the line of what Locke articulated and bring to the fore the Titanic character of Technopolis:

All forms of life, such as the cultivation of land, the planning of human habitations, the building of theatres, the methods of socially educating children, the solution of scientific problems, the creation of new styles, will vitally engross all and everybody. People will divide into “parties” over the question of a new gigantic canal, or the distribution of oases in the Sahara (such a question will exist too), over the regulation of the weather and the climate (...). There is no doubt that, in the future – and the farther we go, the more true it will be – such monumental tasks as the planning of city gardens, of model houses, of railroads, and of ports, will interest vitally not only engineering architects, participators in competitions, but the large popular masses as well. The imperceptible, ant-like piling up of quarters and streets, brick by brick, from generation to generation, will give way to titanic construction of city-villages, with map and compass in hand.<sup>564</sup>

It is not clear if or when we could regulate the climate, but the passage does convey a dynamic that is realized in the planned mega-cities of China and the mass politics around vast infrastructure projects. We have not yet distributed oases in the Sahara, but cities like Dubai and Las Vegas qualify for the general point.

To better understand the Titanic transformation of the world according to the dictates of subjectivity, we need to turn to the financial system, which is the blood that runs through the veins of Technopolis.

Banking and financial markets have a long history and one important step in the process of modernization has been the development of the public stock company. Innovation and efficiency could be greatly increased by separating the ownership of financial resources from the work of entrepreneurs and engineers. Capital markets serve to bring the owners of capital into contact with entrepreneurs and engineers. The Dutch East India Company, the VOC,

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<sup>563</sup> J. Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, pp. 296-298

<sup>564</sup> L. Trotsky, pp. 189 and 202

founded in 1602, was the first company to issue public stocks. This way, the financial resources of a large quantity of smaller and bigger investors could be pooled to make possible the company's expansion. With the subsequent development of the trading of stocks in financial markets, a gigantic technopolitical force was created that eventually would encompass the entire globe. Although corporations have always been focused on creating profits, the issuance of stocks has greatly increased this as ownership is no longer solely in the hands of the company's management. Furthermore, through stock markets companies have been given them a second existence in their abstract system. The multiplication of the price of a certain stock with the total number of stocks compresses the value of a company into a single figure. This fundamentally alters the existence of companies. The life of the entrepreneur who is the sole owner is in relevant senses tied to his company. It is not something at his disposal, but a structure through which his personal life is shaped and which gives his life meaning. For the detached owner of tradable stocks, the company is transformed into a value he can express in a single number and which he has at his disposal. In financial markets, the company is made transparent and fungible, similar to what the mortgage does with the house.

Conceived by the friar Luca Pacioli at the end of the fifteenth century, the system of double-entry bookkeeping which represents the entire balance sheet of a company, was an important step in the direction of making the company an objectified entity in an abstract system. Over time, more and more sophisticated methods of valuation have been developed like for example the Discounted-Cash Flow. It is a method through which the future cash flows of a company are discounted to a value in the present, or better, a vector. Methods of valuation capitalize the whole setting inside and around a company from physical assets like inventories and real estate, to intangibles like the quality of the management, in order to sum them up in clearly presentable and quantitative values. We have elaborated a bit here on the transformation of the company in the world of Technopolis, but the effect of financial markets we described extends much wider. There are vast specialized markets for government bonds, commodities, real estate as well as a large sphere of derivatives that deal with other financial markets. Entire countries are absorbed and transformed by financial markets. In financial markets, their populations, politics and resources are subsumed in abstract systems.

General Domestic Product (GDP) figures for instance put countries on one comparable global scale. More important for markets however, is the figure of a country's GDP *growth*. This figure shows the direction of development and with this figure future potential is actualized in present value. It is not so much the dot as the vector that counts. In other words, it is the permanent transformation that counts. Stability is decline.

The size of a population, its demographic composition as well its education level are represented in a host of values. Talents are this way quantified and made transparent. Furthermore, not just the current production of natural resources, but also unutilized potential, like the number of barrels of oil still untapped in the ground are subsumed in a present objectification. Government policies are reflected in their country's stock and bond markets (the risk premium) and rating agencies attach values to every country's creditworthiness.

Financial markets have spun a gigantic web around the world in which every object or event is incorporated. Attacks by rebels in Nigeria translate into the oil price. The weather is objectified by translating bad or good harvests into fluctuating commodity prices. Whereas lean manufacturing global companies work with just-in-time production and inventories, financial markets work in real time. Objects or events are not relevant in isolation or in their current status, but through their effect and the expectations they shape. In other words, they exist as what Castells has called “flows”<sup>565</sup>.

On screens, everything is transformed and subsumed into moving parts in charts. As everything is transformed into potential force, all that is static is made dynamic. The dynamic of Technopolis was vividly described in the famous passage by Karl Marx:

All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. *All that is solid melts into air*, all that is holy is profaned.<sup>566</sup>

As all that is solid melts into air, capitalism is a truly “permanent revolution”, of which crisis is an inherent part. We can take this process of melting into air quite literal. We have spoken above of a dynamic of objectification and the world as raw material. What is important to note however, is that this does not imply that we are speaking of hard tangible matter or physical objects here. The objectification denotes isolating something so it can stand at our disposal. In essence, physical matter is a drag on this process. Technopolis tends towards completely free mobility in empty space. Abstracted in immaterial systems like financial markets or as a flow something is truly at our disposal. It ties in with what Guy Debord has called the commodity as spectacle, “where the tangible world is replaced by a selection of images, which exist above it, and which at the same time are recognized as the tangible *par excellence*.”<sup>567</sup> Since the days of heavy industry, a larger part of the economy has come to revolve around intangibles. From electronic games to the services on the internet and the sale of products that are bought mainly for their coolness, we are selling representations or experiences. Parts of our natural environment are thus not just detached from their local meaning, but even from their materiality.

Melting solidity, the natural environment is detached, taken up in abstract systems, where it is (for instance in financial markets, but also in markets for goods, in technological projects and in government plans) valued, reorganized and transformed. Technopolis is a gigantic global

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<sup>565</sup> Cf. M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, p. 465

<sup>566</sup> K. Marx, ‘Manifesto of the Communist Party’ (1848), in: *The Marx-Engels Reader (Second Edition)*, R. C. Tucker (ed.), New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978, p. 476 (my italics)

<sup>567</sup> G. Debord, ‘The Commodity as Spectacle’, in: R. Guins and O. Zaragoza Cruz (eds), *Popular Culture: A reader*, London: Sage Publications, 2005, p. 110 (original italics)

in-door space in which any kind of natural order is pushed outside. This in-door world of human creation makes the Crystal Palace of Joseph Paxton such an apt metaphor for modernity in the work of Peter Sloterdijk.<sup>568</sup> For millennia human existence was characterized by the dominance of nature over culture. The modern age started with man's conquest of nature. And as Castells writes:

We are just entering a stage in which culture refers to culture, having superseded nature to the point that nature is artificially revived ("preserved") as a cultural form: this is in fact the meaning of the environmental movement, to reconstruct nature as an ideal cultural form.<sup>569</sup>

This is also the sense in which Giddens speaks of "the end of nature": the natural world has to a large extent become a created environment, leading to an internally referential system of knowledge and power.<sup>570</sup> From climate change to aridity as a result of land erosion, and from diseases caused by crowded areas to natural preservations and the controlled adventure of tourist trips, Technopolis has reorganized and transformed the world. But it is not only our natural environment that is affected.

#### *B). The Technopolitical Transformation of Self and Society*

The constitutive elements of Technopolis and the dynamic they jointly produce not only applies to our environment, but also to ourselves. The self and society also become neutral material that is to be transformed from a detached way of relating. At first this might seem a strange suggestion. The modern world is precisely characterized to large extent by a liberation of the self, the quest for self-development and a dedication to the art of living. Moreover, one of the constitutive elements we described was that the self becomes the magical source of value and meaning. So how then can it become the raw material that is to be reorganized and transformed? The paradox can be resolved by seeing how in modernity a strong split is effectuated within ourselves. One part of the self, that with Charles Taylor we will call "the punctual self", becomes detached from other parts of the self that become the material on which the punctual self works.

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<sup>568</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Im Weltinnenraum des Kapitals: Für eine philosophische Theorie der Globalisierung*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2005

<sup>569</sup> M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, p. 508

<sup>570</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 144



We can approach this issue by going back to something we found in the first chapter where we looked at the forces of universal modernization from a social-scientific perspective, which we can now interpret in their impact on the human condition. In chapter 1 we looked at Daniel Lerner's study *The Passing of Traditional Society*<sup>571</sup>, from which we argued that in the field of socio-demographics, there is a joint development of the processes of urbanization, increased literacy and media consumption.<sup>572</sup>

These three forces create what Lerner calls the 'Mobile Personality'. Habituated more to change in daily life and the ubiquity of personal choice, this creates in individuals a high capacity for identification with new aspects of the social environment. Put differently, it is the capacity to abstract from one's own life and *to see one's self in other people's situation*.<sup>573</sup>

This concept of the Mobile Personality helps us understand how detachment infuses the modern relation towards the self. A fact of life for modern individuals is the visible and close presence of a multiplicity of lifestyles. Although individuals might reject other lifestyles virulently, modern individuals have a greater awareness that one's own way of life is shaped by one's specific background. It is easy to imagine that we could be born somewhere else and as a result that we would have a completely different orientation in life. And even though modern individuals might still consider their own lifestyle the best, this is always to some extent accompanied by the awareness that life could be wholly different. A large part of living in modern societies consists indeed of being confronted with different lifestyles and creating respect or at least tolerance for these different lifestyles. In other words, modern life is pervaded by a view of one's life from the outside. There is nothing necessary about the shape of one's own life as it is molded by being accustomed to certain stimuli and the habits this creates. In analogy with the transformation of maps that we discussed before, our lives have been de-centered. We are not at our natural place in the world, but we are dots on a neutral background. As elementary as this might seem for us, the traditional way of life lacks such a neutral outside point of view.<sup>574</sup> We can experience this when we are confronted with people who are less exposed to modern conditions, in for instance secluded rural areas. Their disdain towards other ways of life is not simply intolerance, but also an incapacity to understand that things can be so different. A different way of life is experienced as going against 'the way

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<sup>571</sup> D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, New York: The Free Press, 1966 (1958)

<sup>572</sup> Section IB. These phenomena were in turn relevant for the process of democratization in modernity, which we discussed in section I.D.

<sup>573</sup> Daniel Lerner uses the word "empathy" for this, which I believe does not capture the dynamic he describes very well. Moreover, because we are looking here at the aspect of detachment from the self, we will not follow Lerner in this to avoid confusion.

<sup>574</sup> Of course, traditional life does know an outside perspective to one's own life in the form of religious or mythical stories. This would concern the universal qualities of a hero or a God that speaks to each personally. But this perspective actually intensifies the particularity of the individual and its choices in contrast with the modern outside perspective that makes individuals feel they could be anyone else.

things are'. Their beliefs and actions are not seen as the outcome of local socialization, but are expressions of how the world according to them essentially works. Returning to Lerner's study, an interesting example of this comes from the surveys he conducted. People were asked what they would do differently if they were presidents of their country. For urbanized and literate people this question was easy to answer. Many 'traditionals' however, responded with stultification. Some even considered the question blasphemous. Their views of the world emerged from their local conditions, from people they knew and the activities they did. They were incapable of detaching their selves from this context and imagining themselves in other roles, let alone one as different as that of the president. In terms of our earlier analysis, the traditional view of the self has, like the view of the world on the cosmograph, an inherent meaningful order or is in philosophical terms, is teleological. Like the world, the individual has a natural place and his orientations have an objective character. The self cannot be detached from this natural place. The traditional view of the world does not conceptualize itself as a horizon; it is the world.

This dynamic in modern life of people being accustomed with the diversity around them and the difference with traditional can at a micro-scale be observed in encounters on the street or in public spaces. There people in modern cities observe as Giddens argues a "civil indifference", which denotes an implicit contract between people who encounter each other.<sup>575</sup> Erving Goffman has analyzed this phenomenon in great detail.<sup>576</sup> When passing other people we constantly give them a brief glance without this coming to consciousness most of the time. On the street people glance at each other simultaneously, indicating that they have seen each other. It is a sign of recognition that becomes more conscious when another does not reciprocate. The glance however, has to be very briefly and the gaze is immediately redirected away from the other, giving a sign that one is not a threat to the other. This way, people no longer look at each other and feel safe at the moment they are closest to each other as they pass one another. This micro-level customization to each other can be contrasted with encounters in more traditional communities. Often there, people will either not look at strangers at all or continue their glance longer, which can create a threatening atmosphere.<sup>577</sup>

Before we proceed with analyzing further phenomena related to the technopolitical transformation of self and society, it is insightful to take a side-step to modern philosophical thought. Not only do we find there an articulation comparable to what we have encountered so far, but it can also help us find further concepts for our investigation. In early modern

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<sup>575</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, pp. 46-47

<sup>576</sup> E. Goffman, *Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order*, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2010 (1971), pp. 11-13

<sup>577</sup> Through such mechanisms of the recognition of the personhood of the other, order is established in modern civil society. In the next chapter we will analyze how this way an embedding of Technopolis is established in modern societies.

philosophy we find a new conceptualization of the self. Instead of some kind of meaningful order to which people naturally tend, Thomas Hobbes for instance rejects the idea that the mind has a certain point of “perpetual Tranquillity”<sup>578</sup> as philosophers before him argued. Instead he posits an expansive force in mankind: “So that in the first place, I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death.”<sup>579</sup> And for John Locke, the human mind is a *tabula rasa*, or blank slate, which can be shaped in any direction. The part of the self that can shape this blank slate is what Charles Taylor in his investigation of early modern thought has called “the punctual self”, of which he says:

The subject who can take this kind of radical stance of disengagement to himself or herself with a view of remaking, is what I want to call the ‘punctual’ self. To take this stance is to identify oneself with the power to objectify and remake, and by this act to distance oneself from all the particular features which are the objects of potential change. (...) the real self is “extensionless”; it is nowhere but in this power to fix things as objects.<sup>580</sup>

The real self is thus a force of manipulation that is distanced, detached, from all concrete determinations. Such determinations, or what Taylor refers to as “particular features”, are objectified by this force of subjectivity after which they can be remade. In early modern philosophy the self is articulated as a subject that not only stands against a world of neutral objects, but also internally finds raw material that can be manipulated. The capacity of man to create himself from a blank slate runs through much of modern thought. It was Rousseau who identified ‘perfectability’ as defining feature of humans.<sup>581</sup> Thus also with regard to the self, “everything that is solid, melts into air”. The particular features of individuals do not arise from a certain attunement to the world or from a human tendency towards a natural direction. Particular features are conceptualized as habits that are formed on the basis of specific stimuli. Man is infinitely malleable by changing the stimuli, a belief brought to its final conclusions by behaviorist psychology. From Herder and Marx on, society and history are not conceived as following a natural order or as being perpetual, but as the product of human ‘making’.<sup>582</sup> The great revolutions of France and Russia enacted the belief that a new type of man could be created and society could be started anew from a *tabula rasa*. The idea of creating a new type of man also animated Nietzsche’s concept of the *Übermensch*. Man as the “undefined animal”

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<sup>578</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, pp. 110-111

<sup>579</sup> Idem, p. 161

<sup>580</sup> C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, pp. 171-172. On p. 175 he elaborates on the term of disengagement: “Disengagement demands that we stop simply living in the bodies or within the traditions or habits and, by making them objects for us, subject them to radical scrutiny and remaking”

<sup>581</sup> J.J. Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, London: Penguin Books, 1984, p. 88

<sup>582</sup> H. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998 (1958)

could through grand creative feats forge a new type that stands to humans as they stand to apes.<sup>583</sup> The Nietzschean sculptor of the raw material man is the final conclusion of the punctual self, a thesis we will come back to in the final part of this section.

Having seen how the rise of the mobile personality has its counterpart in the course of modern philosophy and how it can be further elucidated by dividing it into a detached punctual self and the particular features the former has at its disposal, we can return to our analysis of specific phenomena of living in Technopolis.

According to Anthony Giddens, in post-traditional societies, the self becomes a reflexive project.<sup>584</sup> In traditional societies there is a belief in a set pattern or meaningful ordered whole in the life of people and often *rites de passage* served to mark specific transitions. In modernity this idea of a set pattern of development is rejected and instead the punctual self reflexively reorganizes life's material.

In modernity, life is less and less conceived of as going through set stages that are ritually sanctioned. One important example of this relates to child birth. Birth control has increased the possibility of planning family size and timing. Moreover, delaying marriage and reproduction women have come to give birth throughout their life-cycle. Age and biological condition are increasingly dissociated or detached from reproduction and parenthood. Modern technology is increasingly making issues like whose egg, sperm or womb is used into an object of conscious choice. Women can give birth at old age and men whose sperm is frozen can impregnate a woman after their death. As Castells writes: "All combinations are possible and are socially decided"<sup>585</sup>. In other words, any kind of life-cycle or natural rhythm inherent in the self is denied in modernity.

In another part of the life-cycle, its ultimate part, we see the same development. In traditional societies people fear death and they act to keep it at bay. Characteristic about Technopolis however, is that people seek to deny it altogether. Death is the ultimate enemy of the punctual self that is not attached to locality or matter and disproves its disposition. The paramount aim of the magician is indeed also to find the elixir of immortality. In modernity, medical science endeavors to extend life in every possible way. Furthermore, all medical research is in modernity immediately transformed into hygienic prescriptions that serve to keep death and disease at bay. From anti-smoking campaigns to food items getting in and out of vogue and the scrupulous investigation of the effect of elements of the environment on our health, a large movement of healthy living has emerged. The punctual self detaches from involvement in

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<sup>583</sup> F.Nietzsche, 'Also sprach Zarathustra: Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen' (1883-1885), in: *Also sprach Zarathustra: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, pp. 14-16

<sup>584</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 32

<sup>585</sup> M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network*, pp. 476-480

local practices or habits in order to scrutinize them and sanitize the life world. With scientific research in hand, life is molded as the material of expert knowledge. And when death comes, the event itself is also increasingly sanitized. Castells notes how in the U.S. for instance eighty percent of deaths now take place in the hospital.<sup>586</sup> In other words, the person dying is not in the meaningful environment in which he or she has a natural place. The hospital is the homogenous neutral background in which the person exists as a body in need of care, like all the other dots in this space. And after death, the body is taken away from sight and the mourners have to move elsewhere. Increasingly, mourning and funerals, happenings that in traditional societies were heavily ritualized, are pushed out of sight in modernity. There is little place for them in the fantasy of all-might of the subject and the imperative to always be in motion. Perhaps the most powerful denial of death is the cryogenically freezing of bodies. All the means have been mobilized to detach the subject from the motionless body, waiting in limbo to be magically resurrected.<sup>587</sup>

*Shi Huang-Di's terracotta army*<sup>588</sup>



The themes pertaining to the technopolitical transformation of the self we have described so far, from the mobile personality to the punctual self and the manipulation of the life-cycle are all strongly related to the rise of the modern media and mass communication systems we mentioned at the start of this chapter. The detached nature of the self in modernity namely coincides with an ever-increasing share of our experiences and beliefs being mediated rather than first-hand accounts. This can be seen with regard to newspapers, television, the mobile phone and the internet.

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<sup>586</sup> Idem, p. 484

<sup>587</sup> The figure of magician remained fictional in pre-modern times. Those who came closest to it were the powerful rulers who sought to deny death through mummification, the pre-modern version of cryogenics. Coming close to all-might the Chinese emperor Shi Huang-Di, who was the first to unite the empire, was obsessed with finding the elixir of eternal life and died searching for it. Before his death however, he managed to 'freeze' his army in terracotta.

<sup>588</sup> Source: from Rado Vleugel

The advent of the newspaper was in this sense not just an extension of our knowledge of current affairs, but it also contributed to the creation of a new point of view on the world outside that of our direct experience. As spectators, an ‘imagined community’<sup>589</sup> of the nation or the globe is created. The newspaper created a mass ritual in which individual readers would practically simultaneously consume current affairs. In the background of anyone performing this activity are the numbers of other people whose identities are unknown to us, that are performing the same ritual.

More strongly, television harbors the outside view on life. It intimates people closely with radically different lives in a way that was inconceivable in a traditional society. Through adopting fashion and the copying of specific characters, the malleability of human life is expressed and enforced. With China currently being the country that most rapidly and radically modernizing, the “sixth generation” of Chinese film-makers is especially attentive to the transformation of daily that comes with it. Jia Zhangke’s film *Unknown Pleasures* shows us a group of Chinese youngster mesmerized by popular culture. The dancing and singing of the characters is highly uncomfortable as it is clear that it is a form of blind copying and a disembedding from their everyday contexts. With their quasi-fashionable clothes and their vague expectations, they have become completely out of tune with the village they grew up in.

It is specifically the soap opera that contributes to the outside view of life in the manner through which it presents ‘real life’ situations and characters. Indeed, the popularity of *telenovellas* in Latin America coincides with the emergence of an urban middle class society in these countries. Up until recently, many Latin American countries consisted of a wealthy elite often deriving from landowning families or the sphere of politics and a majority of urban and rural poor. The emergence of a middle class and its lifestyle is the social basis for the popularity of the soap opera. The realness of the soap operas serves as a force in the profound training of modern man to imagine and model himself in strange situations and places.

Television still has a mass broadcasting model, emanating from corporate or state headquarters. In this sense, television has been appropriated by the state from a standpoint of the absolute gaze through for instance propaganda. However, the television is also a form of mass communication that represents a move towards decentralization through the market place. For Baudrillard, the television represents the end of the panoptic system.<sup>590</sup> This development is further enhanced with the rise of modern ICT. In this sense, Daniel Lerner’s 1958 concept of the mobile personality has recently gained literal significance.

With its rapid spread across even the poorest parts of the world, the mobile phone is becoming one of the most powerful agent of modernization. It is not just a device that makes communication easier than in the past. It is a force that transforms our way of relating. Face-to-face contact is embedded in a specific locality. In this sense the people we interact with are

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<sup>589</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 35

<sup>590</sup> J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, p. 29

tied to certain atmospheres, like 'home', that we are emotionally attuned to and that provide meaning. Like the modern map, the mobile phone (to a greater extent than its predecessor the land-line) neutralizes space by making communication everywhere with anyone possible. The contact list of the mobile phone represents our social life like the neutral dots on the map. As space becomes neutral, the subject is freed from attachment or binding to a sphere and has his contacts present at his disposal. Before the mobile phone, places determined the possibilities of contact and had a naturalness to them as people 'belong' in certain places. We are for instance lifted out of the naturalness of a certain environment when we find someone there we would not expect there. With the mobile phone, this can happen continuously at any time and everyone is lifted out of any natural environment. That the mobile phone neutralizes space can be seen from the fact that certain spaces that still require us to be attentive to their internal order and meaning ask of us to turn the phone off (or silent).

The most potent contemporary technopolitical force is the internet. Whereas newspapers and television practice us in imagining different lives and the mobile phone decentralizes communication, the internet allows us to create different lives. It is the world as Will and Representation. Specifically social networking sites play an important role in this process. Of course, it can be argued that through these sites individuals can actually show themselves rather than merely be looking at the icons of television. As such, it is often interpreted as a step closer to the self, a reversal of the distancing and detachment that happened through the other mass media. What is important to note however, is that the position from which individuality is presented on the internet, and hence the way of relating to the self, has changed. The presentation of photos, hobbies, and remarks is done from the perspective of the spectator. The individual sees himself from the outside, imaginative of the way it will impact other known and unknown spectators, and presents himself accordingly. It was an ancient Greek belief that everyone had a numinous creature, a *daimon*, sitting on one's shoulder that revealed our character. Positioned there, it implied that we could not see it ourselves and only others could. And through these others, we could be told who we were.<sup>591</sup> On the internet, we ourselves seek to become the spectator who reveals who we are.

Seeing oneself from the perspective of others is of course a constitutive element of being human and has always played a part in our lives. The modern age however, has greatly amplified the force of this perspective in life. It was primarily from direct first-hand contact in for instance the family and the belief that a god was watching us, that this outside perspective was traditionally incorporated in human life. In the modern age, it is from the perspective of an anonymous or "impartial spectator"<sup>592</sup> that we look at ourselves. Possibly, the widespread introduction of mirrors was an early impetus of this development.<sup>593</sup> By looking in the mirror, we seek to catch our own *daimon*. In different forms, modern life has increasingly become

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<sup>591</sup> H. Arendt, *The Human Condition*

<sup>592</sup> This term was already used by Adam Smith in his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Charleston: BiblioBazaar, 2010 (1759), p. 32

<sup>593</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Sphären I*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998

permeated with the spectator's point of view. Earlier on, photo-cameras and video-recorders have made it possible to capture and control the image in the mirror. Looking at the existential impact of such developments, the character comes to mind of the tourist who compulsively seeks to capture everything that is notable and who then, when he is home, through his albums and videos experiences his vacation. As comical as this character may be, the important question however is first of all whether there actually still is a first-hand experience that one could get on foreign trips even when one is not behind the lens. In a very strong sense, vacation sites have already 'posed' themselves for tourists. In vacation brochures, advertising campaigns and the whole entertainment industry, exotic countries and historical sites showcase themselves for the spectator. In a sense, these places have already become photographs before we take out our cameras. Secondly, the outside perspective does not only exist in the realm of tourism, but is embedded in modern society. The internet has greatly amplified the power to 'mirror' the world and ourselves. Through our presentation on a social networking site, we become the creators of our lives. This holds most blatantly when it involves a deliberate misrepresentation, but also when it merely involves a truthful account. To a great extent, our character, but even the things we do and our hobbies are not transparent to us. They are embedded in structures woven throughout our life that are mostly unconscious. A presentation of them on a profile makes them transparent and involves an objectification of them. User-generated content like the capturing of everyday life on video and presenting it on the internet, implies a taking of the spectator's view to life. It is incisive that people involved in notable events like natural disasters or political violence when they are interviewed often relate to their experiences in the way it is to be presented to the viewer on camera. The modern media were an important force in creating a sphere of second-hand experience next to our direct experiences. These phenomena however, show how to a great extent even our direct experience itself is becoming second-hand. The powerful force in modernity of detachment and objectification turns individuals, even when there is no one watching, into citizen journalists. We carry the spectator's point of view with us. In her study on photography, Susan Sontag argued that reality has come to seem more and more like what the cameras show us. We tend to distrust our perceptions until the camera verifies them.<sup>594</sup> In theatre, the fourth wall is the imaginary wall that separates the audience from the stage. A common contemporary phenomenon in theatre and television is that of 'breaking the fourth wall', through which the actors address the audience directly. In essence however, it are not the actors that reach out to the audience, but it is the audience that has come on to the stage. The internet permanently breaks the fourth wall. Or as Slavoj Žižek put it:

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<sup>594</sup> Quoted in: C. Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*, p. 48. This atmosphere is nicely caught by the Red Hot Chili Peppers' song *Californication*. One line is for instance: "Space may be the final frontier, but it's made in a Hollywood basement".



So it is not only that Hollywood stages a semblance of real life deprived of the weight and inertia of materiality – in late capitalist consumerist society ‘*real social life*’ itself somehow acquires the features of a staged fake, with our neighbors behaving in ‘real’ life as stage actors and extras.<sup>595</sup>

He expresses the experience of *The Truman Show* (brought to us in a movie) in which the lead character finds out that his entire life has been a television show with everyone around him being actors. This is what Baudrillard has called “the recycling of lost faculties”<sup>596</sup>: instead of touching each other, people go to contactotherapy and instead of walking, people go jogging. Direct experiences are increasingly viewed from the outside. Through the activity of the punctual self, life in its brute directness is continually reorganized, transformed and re-created under controlled conditions. And this precisely brings us to one of the perils of Technopolis.

#### **4). The Perils of Technopolis**

From the investigation of its constitutive elements and its dynamic on world and self, we have interpreted the impact of the process of modernization on the human condition as the unfolding of Technopolis. Taking this existential perspective, we have focused on the question of what makes Technopolis so attractive. We tried to understand why it is such an irresistible force worldwide.

The answer lay in the fantasy of all-might that it creates for individuals and the sense of being freed from the bondage of a natural order. As such, Technopolis makes real the age-old motive of the magician who can make the world obey his will. Yet in the course of our investigation, we also saw that there is a more problematic side to this development.

In essence, it is also a process of uprooting or de-centering of life. To the extent that people require an embedding in a life world, or a ‘rooting’ in the ‘earth’, the process of modernization is pernicious. It is a theme that can be found in the age-old story of the magician. The character of doctor Faust, unsatisfied with life and his studies as they are, seeks to unlock nature’s secrets and yield power over her. To achieve this he has to sell his soul to the devil, who then gives him this power of “creative destruction” (as Mephistopheles says: “Ich bin der Geist, der stets verneint! Und das mit Recht; den alles, was entsteht, ist wert, dass es zugrunde geht”) as a result of which Faust is uprooted and he brings misery to his surroundings and the girl he loves. The theme of transgression belongs to the figure of the magician. As a result of his powers and detachment he loses his rootedness or embedding.

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<sup>595</sup> S. Zizek, *The Universal Exception*, p. 271 (original italics)

<sup>596</sup> J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra an Simulation*, p. 13

From this we want to argue that the problematic side of Technopolis is that it makes us *lose touch or connection with a life world*, a process which has several dimensions.

First of all, it implies a loss of direction or orientation. The meaningful order in the world that modernity denies is important for giving us orientation. The acquaintance with a world that is ordered and reliable is central in providing people with what Giddens calls a basic trust, from which they can confront challenges. This basic trust is a “protective cocoon” that blocks out chaos or brackets certain events that can threaten people.<sup>597</sup> Modernity’s technopolitical forces undermine this orientation or steady direction in life. Everything is continuously reorganized and transformed. The certainties of everyday life are impinged on by expert systems. A radical doubt concerning the objects of our environment and the way we live our life pervades modernity, in a way that is existentially troubling. A sense of risk and distrust stems from this continuous change that leads to disorientation.

In addition to the loss of direction, modernity can threaten meaning altogether. In the world of modernity, the subject is the source of meaning. It is thus something that constantly has to be created after which it is then again renegotiated and transformed. This experience was caught in Marx’s remark that everything that is solid, melts into air. Modernity is thus a force that can eclipse all meaning. The freedom of the magician’s all-might is at the same time a loss of heritage. The stable horizon of meaning that derives from a tradition runs the risk of melting into air. But it is also the loss of a heritage in a more direct sense. The heritage is also that what we receive (inherit) from our parents. When the world is in constant flux, much of parental guidance is no longer applicable. The initiation into the world of children by their parents, which establishes the connection between the generations, is made problematic. The forces of Technopolis work to sever this connection. Indeed, for Jacques Lacan tradition, or the symbolic order, is the order of the father. The loss of tradition is also the loss of the father. So existentially, modernity implies a loss of parentage. It turns people into “bastards”, understood as children who have no parents to take care of them.<sup>598</sup> This provides us with what Peter Sloterdijk calls a “psycho-political”<sup>599</sup> understanding of the great socio-demographic shift we found in the process of modernization. The explosion of the population and its rapid relocation into an urban setting can be interpreted as a process of ‘bastardization’. And the violence that comes with this can then be interpreted as a reaction to the melting of meaning by the angry young bastardized men of the world. Modernity creates vast masses of people who are not ‘at home’ in the world. This sheds light on the violent years of European civilization as well as on Latin American guerillas and radical Islam. In the next chapter we will pursue this interpretation further and especially see how bastardization can lead to outbursts of violence. Here we are more concerned with describing in a general sense what the problematic side of modernity is.

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<sup>597</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, pp. 38-40

<sup>598</sup> Alternatively, we could also speak of people being ‘orphaned’ in Technopolis. We choose the term bastardization here, because it also has the connotation of falling outside a meaningful normative order.

<sup>599</sup> See for instance: P. Sloterdijk, *Falls Europa erwacht*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002

There is still another dimension to the process of losing touch with the life world that we need to explore. We saw that the modern mobile personality is accustomed to viewing life from the outside. Especially through modern media, experience and beliefs are increasingly intertwined with and derived from representations. In this sense, the pervasive camera or ‘mirrors’ come to impinge on real experience. Connection with the life world is in this way undermined by making life seem unreal or fictional. We referred in this perspective to *The Truman Show*, but an earlier example from the world of cinema can also be seen as an expression of this. At the same time that the world of modern mass consumption was being shaped in the postwar period, zombie movies became a popular genre. The zombie expresses the sense of a monotony in life and literally the lack of real experience as they are un-dead. The horror that these movies spread is of everyone becoming lifeless machines who carry on but have no real feelings.<sup>600</sup> From this experience of modernity, we can also understand the anxious search for reality. From bungee-jumping to nature trips and the phenomenon of ‘cutting’ (“see if *it* bleeds”), we see a deep yearning to have real experiences again. Looking for excitement and danger, people long to escape from a world that has become fictional or virtual.

Moreover, as in the genre of zombie movies, it is not just about an experience of life becoming lifeless, but also about the magically created world taking over. Marx also used the concept of the magician in relation to the bourgeois:

Modern bourgeois society, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and exchange, is like a sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the underworld he has called up by his spells.<sup>601</sup>

The world we have created has become a force of its own that threatens human life. It is the image of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. The scientist seeks to unlock the secrets of life and create it himself by using rational magic. He runs electricity, the great technical force of the time<sup>602</sup>, through body parts, creating the threatening monster. In the course of the twentieth century science-fiction writing and movies put this theme in the setting of the mechanical machine. The ‘rise of the machines’ spans from Fritz Lange’s *Metropolis* to more recent cyborg movies.

Interesting on this account is the 1959 movie *Forbidden Planet*. It tells the story of a visit to a planet where a few human beings live a prosperous, easy and technologically advanced life.

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<sup>600</sup> An early form of this idea can be found in the work of Descartes, who as he articulated the dream of Technopolis also wondered if he could be sure that the people he saw on the street were not actually machines with hats. (R. Descartes, ‘Meditations on First Philosophy’ (1637), in: *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes (Volume II)*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 21)

<sup>601</sup> K. Marx, ‘Manifesto of the Communist Party’, p. 478

<sup>602</sup> Lenin described his movement as ‘Electrification plus *soviets*’. (H. Arendt, *On Revolution*, London: Penguin Books, 1990 (1963), p. 65)

However, in the past and when the visitors from earth arrive an unstoppable force mysteriously appears to kill them. The advanced technology was acquired by linking the human brain to a machine built by an ancient people of the planet, the Krell. These people were so technologically advanced that they were on the verge to do without any materiality until their civilization was suddenly destroyed. As the monster is attacking, the characters realize that the Krell had “forgotten about the monsters from the Id”. As technology advances all natural restraints that previously shaped man are removed. By linking the brain to the machine, all desires can be technologically fulfilled, but all the wild and violent desires of subjectivity are also released. The unstoppable monster turns out to be a projection from the Id of the person controlling the machine.

Around the turn of the twenty-first century, the same experience was recast in another setting. In *The Matrix*, it is not the world of mechanical machines, but the intelligent network that takes over. The movie trilogy explores the experience of all life as a virtual simulation by a network that has taken over.

These films bring Marx’ idea of a sorcerer who has lost control of the powers he has summoned vividly to life. They have their real counterpart in the dark manifestations of Technopolis. This ranges from the experience of total war in the First World War to the rationally organized extermination of people in the Holocaust. The explosion of the atomic bomb caused the rational scientist Robert Oppenheimer to quote the Hindu god Shiva: “I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds”. Tied with the rational-choice war games of the Cold War, balancing on the abyss, we indeed seem to have forgotten about the monsters from the Id.

What we also see from these movies that express the experience and imagination of their age, is that Technopolis has different shapes and manifestations. From electrified beings taking over to the rise of the machines and absorption in the network, we see Technopolis evolving. But in all of these manifestations, we see a world that is neutralized and put at the disposal of subjectivity, a form of disembedding, and the radical reorganization and transformation of everything in an in-door world in which we lose connection with our life world.

In order to deepen our understanding of the perils of Technopolis, we will end this section with an investigation in modern philosophy, i.e. by looking more closely to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. This is because there is probably no thinker who sensed and articulated the crisis of modernity more strongly than Nietzsche. His philosophy is very multifarious and he had many orientations that reach beyond our scope here. However, what we want to argue here is that we can interpret strands of Nietzsche’s philosophy from the perspective of

Technopolis developed in this chapter.<sup>603</sup> Moreover, we can see how Nietzsche thought it through to its final conclusions. He explored the world of modernity which led him to uncover a profound crisis within it. Being the thinker who also most profoundly dwelt in this crisis, we will also look at how he sought to counter it. We will argue here that although Nietzsche followed the perilous logic of modernity to its end, he did not manage to break out of it. Put differently, having found the pernicious effect of Technopolis, he did remain within its conceptual scheme. It was with modern means that he sought to counter the malaise inherent in modernity. Once we have identified how this works, we can see what the limitations of the conceptual scheme of modernity are and that we need to turn elsewhere to counter the perils of modernity.

Friedrich Nietzsche radically carried through the neutralization of the world. Thinkers before him like René Descartes and Thomas Hobbes already conceived the world as having no moral meaning. For them only mathematical features could be ascribed to the world in itself. With Immanuel Kant, the world in itself become unknowable. These mathematical properties were according to him projections of the human subject. Nietzsche followed Kant in stripping the world of the properties we normally attribute to it. In a passage from *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* he holds off metaphors for the world like that of an organism or a machine that many of his predecessors followed. He continues:

Der Gesamt-Charakter der Welt ist dagegen in alle Ewigkeit Chaos, nicht im Sinne der fehlenden Nothwendigkeit, sondern der fehlenden Ordnung, Gliederung, Form, Schönheit, Weisheit, and wie alle unsere ästhetische Menschlichkeiten heissen.<sup>604</sup>

For Kant the projections of the subject were fixed categories. For Nietzsche the subject was not only the source of value and meaning, but its projections also had no fixed quality. In his philosophy, Nietzsche completely de-centered everything, including the subject and its projections. He set everything in motion and existence was nothing but a process of constant reorganization and transformation. There is only a multiplicity of forces he calls *Wille zur Macht*, which carries out this reorganization. This is not driven by any kind of longing for correspondence to the real world, nor by any order inherent in subjects, but only by a quest for their own enhancement. In Nietzsche we thus find a radical subjectivity. The subject itself is also de-centered. What we call “I” is according to Nietzsche nothing but the current

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<sup>603</sup> So we will for instance not discuss his antagonism with Christianity, a core theme in his philosophy. Instead, we will show how what we have identified as the structures of Technopolis can be identified in his work and how he thought these through to the crisis Technopolis entails. We are here thus interpreted parts of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

<sup>604</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Die fröhliche Wissenschaft’ (1882), in: *Morgenröte, Idyllen aus Messina, Die fröhliche Wissenschaft: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari, München (eds): Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, p. 468

constellation of permanently shifting forces. Subjectivity is the source of meaning and the world in itself is deprived of any inherent meaningful order. We are thus also in no way embedded in the world and our relation to it is detached. Consciousness and thinking about the world is nothing but a tool to gain power over the world:

Wir haben eben gar kein Organ für das Erkennen, für die "Wahrheit": wir "wissen" (oder glauben oder bilden uns ein) gerade so viel als er im Interesse der Menschen-Heerde, der Gattung, nützlich sein mag<sup>605</sup>.

The world is nothing but the raw material on which the subject (whether it is a person, an impulse or a species) forces its will. With the world as inherently meaningless, subjectivity for Nietzsche is a creative, or we could say magical, force. He conceived himself as being an explosive force that was released upon the world rather than a human: "Ich bin kein Mensch, ich bin Dynamit"<sup>606</sup>. We can thus reconstruct the world of Technopolis in Nietzsche's philosophy.

Thinking through its conceptual scheme led Nietzsche to identify a profound crisis inherent in it. The parable of the madman (*der tolle Mensch*) depicts how this insight goes beyond what his contemporaries can see. In the parable, the madman approaches a square in broad daylight with a lantern and asks the people there what has become of God. The others laugh at him and tell him that God is dead, but they do not seem to believe this is a grave matter. For the madman however, what Nietzsche called "the death of God", constitutes a catastrophe of meaning:

Wir haben ihn getödtet, - ihr und ich! Wir Alle sind seine Mörder! Aber wie haben wir diess gemacht? Wie vermochten wir das Meer auszutrinken? Wer gab uns den Schwamm, um den ganzen Horizont wegzuwischen? Was thaten wir, als wir diese Erde von ihrer Sonne losketteten? Wohin bewegt sie sich nun? Wohin bewegen wir uns? Fort von allen Sonnen? Stürzen wir nicht fortwährend? Und rückwärts, seitwärts, vorwärts, nach alle Seiten? Giebt es noch ein Oben und ein Unten? Irren wir nicht wie durch ein unendliches Nichts?<sup>607</sup>

The crisis the madman speaks of is that of nihilism, in which all the highest values lose their value. The bystanders believe that the demise of the traditional order does not render man's orientation problematic. For the madman however, the wiping away of the traditional horizon and the collapse of the meaningful order in the world casts a great shadow over human

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<sup>605</sup> Idem, p. 593

<sup>606</sup> F. Nietzsche, 'Ecce homo' (1908), in: *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari, München (eds): Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, p. 365

<sup>607</sup> F. Nietzsche, 'Die fröhliche Wissenschaft', p. 481

existence, which is why he carries a lantern. If God and our other highest beliefs turn out to be mere projections, we are confronted with a collapse of meaning. For Nietzsche too, everything that is solid, melts into air (again: “aren’t we falling continuously? And backwards, sideways, forwards, to all sides? Is there still an above and a below?”), and he questions its bearing on human existence. As the world in itself becomes meaningless and human projection becomes the basis of value, then all value is cast into doubt and we are left with an “endless nothing”. Our surroundings are increasingly pervaded by an air of nothingness.

We saw that the perils of Technopolis implied a loss of direction and a collapse of meaning, a conclusion we have also reached by following Nietzsche’s logic. And from the same line, we also find in Nietzsche the conclusion that life becomes unreal, or fictional. If reality is a representation of Will to Power, and reality is thus projection, then it is also fiction. The religion of Christianity for instance, but also that of the ancients should not and cannot be judged on the basis of its truth (“we have no organ for that”), but as a mirror of their life experience. A large part of Nietzsche’s philosophy can be seen as an attempt to see through these mirrors in order to judge the quality of something. If there is no reality in itself, but only Will to Power, then what Nietzsche seeks to discern is the quality of a specific expression of Will to Power. Furthermore, in *Götzen-Dämmerung*, Nietzsche expresses the sense of reality vanishing in an aphorism on “how the true world finally became a fable”<sup>608</sup>. From Antiquity on and especially in Christianity, the true world was placed in the beyond. In the course of history, reality comes to stand further and further until with Kant it is declared out of reach. The conclusion Nietzsche draws is that both true reality and falsehood cease to make sense.

We discerned how modernity increasingly turns everything into representation that are in continuous flux, an idea that Nietzsche radically expresses in philosophy. For him, in essence every experience, object or person is strictly unique, but through representations, like those of language, there is no way to express or even conceive of this.<sup>609</sup> Life is perpetual falsification.

We have seen two things so far. First of all, we saw that we can interpret Nietzsche’s philosophy along the lines of Technopolis that we described above. Secondly, we saw that he thinks through these lines and unearths a profound crisis inherent in this structure of modernity. It is a crisis that disorients, eclipses meaning and dilutes the sense of reality.

So how did Nietzsche deal with this crisis? Next we will look at how he sought to overcome the identified crisis. Where did he look for remedies?

One important line of reasoning that Nietzsche followed was to look within the world he unearthed for something that was closer to reality or a type of criterion to judge phenomena

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<sup>608</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Götzen-Dämmerung’ (1889), in: *Der Fall Wagner, Götzen-Dämmerung, Der Antichrist, Ecce homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben, Nietzsche contra Wagner: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari, München (eds): Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, pp. 80-81

<sup>609</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Die fröhliche Wissenschaft’, pp. 590-593

with. For instance, he distinguished between what he calls life-affirming (lordly) and life-denying (slavish) moralities.<sup>610</sup> There is no point in looking at the truth-claims of a morality. All are an expression of a way of life and its Will to Power. The criterion Nietzsche then finds is whether this Will to Power has the strength to embrace life or whether its weakness lead it to *ressentiment*. Life-affirming moralities valor strength, individuality, activity, excellence, force, whereas life-denying moralities valor accommodation, restraint, passive acceptance, equality and charity. Through this distinction Nietzsche criticized the Christian culture around him which he saw as a slave morality and sought to retrieve meaning from the lord morality of the ancient Greeks. Not the correspondence to a meaningful order in the world, but the health of a world view becomes the criterion for attaching value to it. By resisting *ressentiment* and the denial of the chaos and struggle that is life, Zarathustra thus spoke of “remaining true to the earth”<sup>611</sup>.

Also, as the true world has become a fable and both true and false cease to be make sense, Nietzsche seeks to retrieve some form of innocence, understanding the word as a game (*Spiel*). This can be found in the metaphors of the playing child as the highest expression of Will to Power. No longer under the burden of morality, no longer needing to fight others, but from a complete and innocent naturalness, the playing child acts. Not hurt by others or with any resentment, it is a new beginning, a self-turning wheel.<sup>612</sup> Further on in the *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche entertains the idea of the will actually giving itself up, being redeemed, and resting in something beyond it (*amor fati*).

However, it is not at all clear how he can come to such conclusions and find a kind of meaningful naturalness on the basis of his ontology. He hints at some kind of meaningful order to which we can be attuned and in which we are at home. He looks for a dimension beyond the will with its incessant struggle and polar opposition to the world. Yet the conceptual scheme of his philosophy hinders him from going in that direction. Indeed he argued: “*Diese Welt ist der Wille zur Macht – und nichts ausserdem*”<sup>613</sup>. He is drawn towards a different conceptualization of the world and man’s place in it that goes beyond his technopolitical views that see everything as Will to Power and its projections. However, he did not develop the ontology to make this possible.

Furthermore, his philosophical concepts render his search for a criterion of life-affirmation, remaining true to the earth or health, problematic. If all is Will to Power then all our

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<sup>610</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Zur Genealogie der Moral’ (1887), in: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Zur Genealogie der Moral: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari, München (eds): Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, pp. 270-274

<sup>611</sup> F. Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, p. 15

<sup>612</sup> Idem, pp. 29-31

<sup>613</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Jenseits von Gut und Böse’ (1886), in: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Zur Genealogie der Moral: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari, München (eds): Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, p. 5



predicates of the world are merely projections and do not touch upon the world in itself. However, this brings him to the often-voiced criticism of the liar's paradox. If all is merely projection of the Will to Power and there is no truth, then there is also no way to claim that all is Will to Power. The idea that "this world is Will to Power – and nothing beyond it" itself also has to be merely an interpretation. All human intellect is "perspectivist" and cannot look beyond its corner.<sup>614</sup> In *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, Nietzsche seems to acknowledge this point. There he asks whether his own views are also only interpretation. "Well then", he answers, "all the better"<sup>615</sup>. It is from such lines of reasoning that people like Richard Rorty and Alexander Nehamas have developed a postmodern interpretation of Nietzsche.<sup>616</sup> This interpretation however does not account for the crisis of meaning that Nietzsche articulated. The perspectivist nature of life is not something Nietzsche unequivocally celebrated, but stood for him also for a great loss that led to an impasse.

But we haven't yet spoken directly of Nietzsche's most far-reaching remedy for the loss of meaning in our age. This is his suggestion for the "revaluation of all values" by great creative individuals. New values are required to build a horizon and counter to force of nihilism. To create new values on the rubble of the old world requires extraordinary creative powers. This is the task of the *Übermensch*. Zarathustra says he is the announcer of both. After the *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche started to worry about the possibilities of such individuals to come about in the world of modernity. To be able to create new values, they would have to have an entirely different outlook from the rest. Thus in this period, Nietzsche starts to think about the institutional underpinning of the revaluation of all values.<sup>617</sup> He calls for the creation of a new caste of men that are to be raised separate from the rest of mankind. Secluded from the rest and raised with discipline and competition, "the plant man" can be brought to great flourishing. The loss of meaning is thus to be countered by the breeding of a new type of individual. Like a gardener, but Nietzsche also often uses the metaphor of a sculptor, the "material man" is studied and then shaped to greatness. Through the willful acts of subjectivity the loss of meaning is to be countered. Indeed, Nietzsche argues that in the past geniuses were a strike of luck. In the future however, they can be consciously willed. There is thus the motive here of the consciously taking into hand and shaping of material. Furthermore, this new type of people also relates to the rest of mankind as a sculptor of a hammer to his material. It was his ability to shape people into form that Nietzsche admired in

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<sup>614</sup> F. Nietzsche, 'Die fröhliche Wissenschaft', pp. 626-627

<sup>615</sup> F. Nietzsche, 'Jenseits von Gut und Böse', p. 37

<sup>616</sup> R. Rorty, *Irony, Contingency and Solidarity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989; A. Nehamas, *Life as Literature*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1985

<sup>617</sup> F. Nietzsche, 'Nachlaß 1884-1885' (1980), in: *Nachlaß 1884-1885: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, pp. 541 and 195; F. Nietzsche, 'Nachlaß 1885-1887' (1980), in: *Nachlaß 1885-1887: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, p. 494

Napoleon.<sup>618</sup> Creating the new values, a new order of rank is also to be established, on the basis of which these great individuals could flourish. The great individual, or *Übermensch*, is a transformation of mankind, even its overcoming.

In sum, Nietzsche drew the conclusions from the neutralization of the world and subjectivity becoming the source of value, which led him to expose the crisis inherent in Technopolis. Rather than breaking out it, he himself however also sought his answer to the crisis in terms of technopolitical subjectivity. Nietzsche sometimes was pressed in the direction of a different conceptualization of the world and man's place in it, from which meaning could be retrieved. However, he could not articulate this. The remedy to modernity's malaise lay in the conscious shaping of the material man. The loss of meaning was to be countered by a detached operation of breeding great individuals like horses. These individuals in turn are also to have society in their hands as material at their disposal.<sup>619</sup> The dissolution of meaning in subjectivity is to be countered for Nietzsche by the grandest type of subject, the *Übermensch*. We come to a metaphor Nietzsche himself was fond of using, that of the snake biting its own tail. Nietzsche thought through the crisis inherent in Technopolis. The crisis he identified however, also ends up undermining his own aspirations. In this sense we can say that Nietzsche drew Technopolis' last conclusions. He sought to overcome it, but by its own means. It is from this point that we need to look elsewhere to counter the crisis of meaning in modernity. We have to look for a new way of conceptualizing world, self, and our relation to both, that breaks outside of the conceptual scheme of Technopolis and its logic.

Before our investigation of Nietzsche's philosophy, when we looked at the impact of Technopolis on the human condition in the course of this chapter, we saw that its forces worked against and modified a world that is prior to it. Technopolis is a vision or tendency that works against a background that we have thus far only described negatively, in its opposition to Technopolis. Moreover, in our macro-perspective in chapter II and III, we saw that the universal forces of modernization were confronted with the pervasiveness of traditional culture. This served as the underpinning or basis (or "nutrient culture") on which modernity stands. We could thus expect to find a counterpart of this in our existential investigation of the human condition.

What if the line of modern philosophy, from Descartes to Nietzsche, 'jumped over' a sphere that is prior to the Technopolitical structures they described? What if the perils of Technopolis push us in the direction of looking outside of it and investigating the ground in which it rests? Is there a dimension in life that precedes Technopolis, but also makes it possible and which holds the potential sources to balance its de-centering effects? A dimension not acknowledged in modern thought, but to which we now have to turn after Nietzschean 'dynamite' blew up its framework?

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<sup>618</sup> F. Nietzsche, 'Nachlaß 1884-1885', p. 223

<sup>619</sup> In the *Nachlaß*, Nietzsche describes how the modern weakening of man turns them into slaves, waiting to be controlled by new masters.

This is the course that has been taken by many important thinkers after Nietzsche. Martin Heidegger's Daseinsanalytik is an articulation of the dimension that precedes the subject-object opposition, a dimension in which there is a meaningful order to which man and world belong. Peter Sloterdijk's spheres are a pre-objectified lived space between people that characterizes elementary life. Alisdair MacIntyre's argument on "why the Enlightenment had to fail" parallels our discussion here. He argues that the Enlightenment did away with any kind of teleology in the world (what we have described as neutralization). But, he argues, this undermines any kind of ethics, because that requires a concept of what man is, of what he could be if he fulfilled his nature (*telos*) and of the trajectory towards it. The only way to have ethics or virtue requires some form of teleology (what we have called meaningful order), which he looks for in the sphere of practices.<sup>620</sup>

In line with the path taken by these thinkers, in the next section we will seek to articulate the dimension of life that precedes Technopolis. It is a dimension we will describe as "embeddedness" and with which we can shed light on the persistence of traditional culture we encountered before.

## **B). Traditional Culture as Embeddedness or Dwelling**

### *Introduction*

The universal structures of modernity identified in the first chapter can thus be reinterpreted existentially as the unfolding of Technopolis. Throughout our investigation we encountered the persistence of traditional culture in modernity and it is to this that we need to turn now. In this section we will reinterpret this persistence existentially to see what it tells us about the human condition. We will describe this as "Embeddedness" or "Dwelling". So whereas modernity transforms the human condition into the world of Technopolis, this stands against the world as Dwelling. In the course of our investigation we will see that we can also apply a term from East Asian philosophy, Tao, to the latter.

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<sup>620</sup> M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1993 (1927); P. Sloterdijk, *Sphären I: Blasen*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998; A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, London: Duckworth, 1985 (1981) And in a comparable way, Bruno Latour too shows how the world of modernity, or its "constitution", has never been realized, pointing us back to the premodern: "It is not only the Bedouins and the !Kung who mix up transistors and traditional behaviours, plastic buckets and animal-skin vessels. What country could not be called 'a land of contrasts'? We have reached the point of mixing up times. We have all become premodern again". B. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, p. 75

In chapter II we looked at how in different cases like the influence of the state in the economy, or the vibrancy of democracy, modernity was shaped by traditional culture, yielding “multiple modernities”. We concluded that chapter with the observation that the structures of modernity always require such a cultural setting, which we explored in more detail for several Western countries in chapter III. The cultural setting provides a basis or underpinning for the world of modernity. Put differently, it is a ‘nutrient’ which modernity requires. Modernity thus rests in something which is different from it.

We saw the same when we interpreted modernity as Technopolis above. Technopolis is a tendency, but not the whole story of life in modernity. What the other part is, we only hinted at and described negatively, in distinction with Technopolis. The house for instance is transformed in modernity into a transparent object at the disposal of the human subject, which is different from its existence in everyday life as a home which is emotionally charged, a background element of life and not transparent. We saw how in modernity the body becomes a neutral object, the qualities of which are increasingly manipulated. Against this, we touched on how this operates against a background of something like a life-cycle and rites of passage, which hint at an experience of the body as a meaningful whole with an internal order. In Technopolis, our social environment is transformed into neutral dots in empty space and time, accessible digitally at will. We hinted here at a more primary experience of people being tied to specific places and times.

Technopolis is indeed a vision or tendency. It implies a change in a certain direction, but as these examples show, we also still have access to a different dimension that precedes it. This background is what we will here seek to articulate positively and directly.

The paramount field in which to look to understand the world as Dwelling, is thus these elements of everyday life like the home, the street and interpersonal encounters. In this sense, our investigation will follow the path taken by thinkers like Martin Heidegger and Peter Sloterdijk. Something we will focus on specifically are those fields of life in which people have developed specific skills or certain levels of craftsmanship. These fields will be particularly helpful in discerning the human condition as embedded. This parallels the focus of Alisdair MacIntyre on what he calls “practices”, which he illustrates by looking at activities like painting or playing chess. In a more comprehensive way, Oswald Spengler has spoken of what we can call the “tactility” of cultural life on which we will also draw below. Apart from the work in Western philosophy, we will also look at Asian practices and their articulation in schools of thought. Over the centuries, these schools have gained important insights into the human condition of embeddedness or dwelling, which as we shall see, greatly complement more recent investigations.

These different fields and sources will be woven together in order to discern the elements of the human condition that precedes and is different from the human condition in the world of Technopolis. Some of the elements we will describe are so basic and primary in human life that they persist in modernity without being transformed or altered by it. Others are of a more complex character and they come into direct confrontation with the world of Technopolis. As

a result, they come to stand in a dynamic and dialectical relationship with it. They can persist in modernity, be undermined by it, or be transformed as a result of this interaction and reemerge differently in modernity. In this way, they are not merely a force of embedding that opposes Technopolis and its crisis of meaning ( by existing next to it), but they are then a force of “re-embedding”. Understanding the interplay and prospects of the two dynamics shaping the human condition in our age will be the subject of the next chapter.

Articulating the world as dwelling is complex and it is harder to isolate its constitutive elements and dynamics than it was for the world of Technopolis. Nevertheless, we will seek to bring out the different nature of dwelling by comparing it with the constitutive elements and dynamics we discerned of Technopolis. To order and bring out these differences, table 5 at the end of this chapter summarizes the distinction. It serves however more as a general indication and brings together opposing groups of concepts rather than being a symmetrical opposition.

Thus we will also start at the different point than we did with Technopolis. Rather than starting with how some kind of meaningful order can be opposed to the neutralization of the world in Technopolis, we will start with the *way of relating* that is characteristic of the world as dwelling. The way of relating seems to be the most accessible entry point as it can be described from very common experiences. Against detachment, we will here speak of attunement. Our discussion of Technopolis ended with its perilous effect of losing touch with the world. By opening with the ancient concept of *mētis*, we will describe the elements of embedding from a quite literal understanding of being in touch with the world. From here on, we will go on to describe the meaningful order that exists in dwelling by elaborating on a space that is characterized by forms and is spherical (in contrast with empty space) and a time that is rhythmical (in contrast with empty time). Next we will contrast the dynamic of the radical reorganization and transformation of the world in Technopolis with a form of “letting” or dwelling in what we will also be described as the Tao. Finally, the reorganization and transformation of the self by the punctual self will be contrasted with a self that is rooted or tactically embedded.

## **1). Attunement as the Way of Relating**

### *Local Involvement*

We can start our discussion of the structures pertaining to Dwelling and its way of relating through the ancient Greek concept of *mētis*. *Mētis* denotes a form of knowledge that is locally situated and has to do with man’s capacity to act skillfully in the face of a changing environment. It was in this last sense that in Homer Ulysses was said to have *mētis*. We can gain insight into *mētis* by contrasting it with the detached technopolitical way of relating in

modernity. Some interesting examples of grand technopolitical structures and the way they contrast with embeddedness can be found in J.C. Scott's study *Seeing like a State*.<sup>621</sup> Scott discusses several large-scale government projects from different countries around the world. He discusses Soviet collectivization as well as the forced villagization in Tanzania under Julius Nyerere and the creation of the city Brasilia in Brazil, which we also described above. These projects are examples of what he calls "High Modernism" and coincide with the way of relating we have described as Technopolis. In all these cases, the projects were implemented from an abstract human plan that had no sensitivity towards the local environment. This environment was held to be neutral and was planned to be reordered and transformed according to the wishes of visionary leaders. According to a rational blueprint, policies like the creation of a new country capital or the restructuring of agriculture were implemented, materializing the Cartesian dream of man becoming master and possessor of nature. Citing a Soviet observer, Scott gives the example that "twelve agronomists have been sitting for twenty days composing an operational-production plan for the non-existent raion commune without ever leaving their offices or going into the field". Furthermore, in another case "the squares were drawn on a map without any reference to actual villages, settlements, rivers, hills, swamps or other demographic and topological characteristics of the land".<sup>622</sup>

Scott argues that these projects led to great human and natural disasters. What is most important for our discussion here is how High Modernism has to be contrasted with local knowledge, or *mētis*. It is a form of knowledge that is based on experience and practice and as such cannot be caught completely in general laws. In Scott's study this is exhibited in the farmer who is confronted with the general laws formulated by agricultural policy. We encountered the farmer already when we retraced modern nutrition to the farm that is being transformed into an industrial plant. Rather than following the rules that apply to plants in general at an industrial farm, the small farmer has a knowledge that derives from working at a certain place with *these* plants. This is also the type of knowledge that a smith has of his materials and his tools, but it also has to do with many everyday activities. We can write down all the steps that need to be done to ride a bicycle, but it is impossible for someone to learn how to ride a bicycle without doing it. The dexterity in this activity derives from engagement in the activity and cannot be caught theoretically.<sup>623</sup> This is because it is critically connected to our sense of touch and a certain hand-eye coordination. In many skills, our fingers for instance perform a proactive, probing touch that looks for signs that stimulate our thinking, the so-called "localized" touch. For instance, before we could scientifically establish the chemical quality of a material, medieval goldsmiths identified them through the 'assay'. Based in his acquaintance with materials, the smith would role and press the object with his

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<sup>621</sup> J.C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998

<sup>622</sup> S. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village After Collectivization*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995; quoted in J.C. Scott, *Seeing like a State*, p. 211

<sup>623</sup> In his 'ethological sketch of the life world', Ad Verbrugge in this sense argues that "the circumstantial is the essential". (A.M. Verbrugge, *De verwaarlozing van het zijnde*, Nijmegen: SUN, 2001, p. 169)

fingertips. His judgment derived from the knowledge in his fingertips when they found a particular spot that suggested an impurity. Many people who use their hands professionally like carpenters or technicians, but also guitar players and rowers develop thickened skin, calluses, on their hands. It might seem that this should numb their sense of touch, but in fact by protecting the nerve endings in the hand, the callus actually makes the localized touch more effective and less hesitant.<sup>624</sup> This knowledge that derives from touch and exists in the body is expressed by a Chinese saying that a kung fu teacher once informed me about which states that the mind understands, but the body knows. It is why teachers in many crafts, like martial arts, are often reluctant to express general principles in advance. Even when a general principle is cognitively grasped, this does not mean one can apply it practically. When the body then finally grasps this principle, it goes together with a feeling of deeper knowledge (and one would say “oh, *now* I see”). Beyond cognitive grasp, the body has to find things out for itself. We also express this deeper understanding as a bodily experience when we say that we have been touched by something, like a piece of music or someone else’s words.

Fascinating on this account is the work of Howard Gardner on “multiple intelligences”. Looking beyond what IQ-tests measure, he argues that intelligence can be of different sorts and also pertains to bodily-kinesthetics, spatial judgment and music.<sup>625</sup>

### *Tacit Character*

What is involved in *mētis* is what Michael Polanyi calls “the tacit dimension” which relates to the fact that in many different fields “we know more than we can tell”<sup>626</sup>. Several experiments have shown that through practice, people can become very skilled at judging weights without being able to explain what they are doing. Polanyi cites examples in which electrical shocks were administered after being shown certain “shock syllables” or the uttering of “shock words” along with other stimuli. In both cases, the subjects were seen to either anticipate the shocks or show avoiding behavior to avert the shocks. On questioning however, the subjects were unable to identify the shock syllables and words and were often not even aware that they were showing anticipating or evasive behavior. In more everyday cases, we can see that we know more than we can tell in for instance identifying faces. That we generally have this capacity shows that we are in some sense aware of the particular features of these faces. However, in most cases we will be unable to tell explicitly what these features, from hair type, nose shape, to skin color and bone structure are. We are well-acquainted with the faces of colleagues and friends, but on conscious recollection, it is hard to grasp these features.

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<sup>624</sup> R. Sennett, *The Craftsman*, London: Penguin Books, 2009 (2008), pp. 152-153

<sup>625</sup> J.Q. Chen, H. Gardner and S. Moran (eds), *Multiple Intelligences Around the World*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009

<sup>626</sup> M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2009, (1966), p. 4

Similarly, we are generally capable of sensing the mood someone is in, without necessarily knowing what the features were from which we drew our conclusion. It is in crafts like those mentioned above that people develop the capacity in the fingers or the eye to see directly what something is without having to add up the different features, or even without being able to identify what the features are on which a conclusion is based. These crafts on the other hand do show us that although we may not be able to tell, we are capable of teaching these skills to someone else. The way this is done is in the direct proximity of the teacher who makes something clear by pointing at it, an ‘ostensive definition’, rather than by giving a theoretical definition. It requires the student, an apprentice or an intern at a hospital for example, to be attentive to grasp the meaning of what the teacher is pointing at. This will at first be very hard for the student, but through concentration and practice, the senses can be trained to become capable at this.

At very high levels of skill it is also possible that the knowledge remains tacit and dies with the master. This is what happened with the skill of Antonio Stradivari, the famous Renaissance violin maker. His sons Omobono and Francesco did not reach the level of their father and after them, several centuries of research have sought to unlock the secrets of Stradivari. From exact physical copies to chemical analysis of the varnish and more experimental methods, researchers have sought to bring to life the craftsmanship of Stradivari. Nevertheless, professional musicians are still able to instantaneously distinguish the sound of an original from a copy. It is known that in the complex workshop where he lived with his students, Stradivari was omnipresent in the working process. Through him, the various different activities received their place and provided insights for improvement. This knowledge remained tacit only for him and with his death, the clues scattered over the workshop lost their coherence.<sup>627</sup>

Whereas from a theoretical point of view, we seek to describe unambiguously and with lucidity how to do something, this tacit knowledge and the use of the ostensive definition points us towards the extent in which our communication is wound up with gestures. It is in the face-to-face contact and the display of the teacher that something is shown without being told. As training expert W. T. Gallwey argues, for the complete novice learning something, like how to play tennis, can in words amount to an extreme amount of instructions that are impossible to follow at first. What is a better way of instruction is for the teacher to first show a correct swing several times, which the student should heed carefully, after which he or she should try to reproduce it. Seeing the movement as a whole, the student should try to ‘absorb’ what is seen (more on this later). Verbal instructions for correction can then come later.<sup>628</sup> Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who from a linguistic perspective sought to move away

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<sup>627</sup> R. Sennett, *The Craftsman*, pp. 74-80

<sup>628</sup> W.T. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2008, p. 6



from a theoretical and detached understanding of meaning towards one grounded in praxis, also admonished “denk nicht, sondern schau”.<sup>629</sup>

*Stradivarius in his workshop*<sup>630</sup>



Aristotle already argued that fields like navigation and medicine cannot be formalized into sets of rules. Whereas the pure theoretical knowledge of mathematics can be sufficient to calculate a route, the act of navigation is of a different character and requires a trained eye and a wide range of experience with different circumstances. And in medicine, the work of a doctor is not simply the application of general rules, but involves variable local circumstances

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<sup>629</sup> L. Wittgenstein, ‘Philosophische Untersuchungen’ (1953), in: *Werkausgabe Band 1: Tractatus logico-philosophicus, Tagebücher 1914-1916, Philosophische Untersuchungen*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997, p. 277

<sup>630</sup>Source: <http://virtualofficefaq.files.wordpress.com/2009/10/antonio-stradivari.jpg?w=500&h=493>

and a trained instinct through which the doctor can often intuit what is wrong and make his diagnosis.<sup>631</sup>

What we have described as *mētis* is not just restricted to the fields of objects or tools, but also pertains to interpersonal spheres. It is central in the competitive sports. In fencing, boxing or other martial arts a trained eye as well as moves (and sets of moves) are required that through practice have become reflexes or second nature. Moreover, these moves against the potential attacks of an opponent also have to be attuned to the possibility of deception of the opponent by feigning moves or to launch a deceptive attack oneself to draw the opponent in. Moves by one player trigger instant countermoves by the other. Every action by the opponent is meaningful and is constantly interpreted in light of what follows next like seeing the beginning of a strike in a step.

But also in cooperative activities we can discern the tacit and localized understanding. In dancing, performing music in ensemble and lovemaking, what is required is an instinct trained through practice with which to interpret and anticipate the actions of others. A nod or a simple movement or touch can lead those who cooperate into subsequent movements although the participants may not be able to make explicit how they do this. A couple that is strongly attuned to dancing with each other for instance, may have such a fine way of communicating with each other, which they only realize when they dance with someone else and the small hints no longer work and the meaningful patterns they are used to lose their strength. In team sports, the competitive and cooperative aspects are combined. They require both understanding and joining in with the movements of teammates as well as strategically countering the movements of the opposing team. Brief eye-contact and minute nods are forms of tacit communication in the team sports.

The understanding that is involved in all these examples of *mētis* is thus not theoretical or abstract, but refers to timing or the right actions at the right time. This sense of what is right stems from meaningful structures or an order that is internal to the activity. Before we continue to describe what kind of order this is, we need first to deepen our understanding of the way we relate to ourselves and our surroundings in these spheres.

### *Attunement as Going “Through”*

So when we are engaged in crafts or the other activities we described, we are consciously aware of part of what we are doing, but a large part also remains tacit. We can for instance speak explicitly of the competition we are participating in, but it is harder to explain how we coordinate our specific movements to those of others or what the hints and gestures are on

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<sup>631</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, Amsterdam: Kallias, 1997, p. 106

which we respond. How can we characterize these two aspects (one conscious and the other unconscious or tacit) of the activity? What is the relationship between them?

Turning back to the example of looking at faces, we are aware of the face we recognize, but we are not aware of the specific features from which we derive the facial recognition. Thus we are only aware of specific features by the way they lead us to the recognition of the whole face, but not of them in themselves. It is away *from* the features that we attend *to* the face. And it is for instance *from* our fingertips that we attend *to* the dance we are performing. In other words, that of which we are only tacitly aware, is something we ‘disattend’ from towards something else.<sup>632</sup> We for instance feel the touch of the hand, but we attend to the activity of dancing. Using the terms of Michael Polanyi, we can call that of which we are only tacitly aware the *proximal* (the facial features, our fingertips) and that which we attend to the *distal* (the whole face, the dance).<sup>633</sup> We are aware of the proximal in the way it bears on the distal. When we need to adjust our body in a dance or a sport for instance, we attend to our movements in the way that they lead to the effect we seek with them. This distinction of Polanyi can be made clear if we turn to the example of using a probe for touch in the dark or the way a blind person uses a stick to tap on objects. When using a probe or stick for the first time, we will be aware of the way the object feels in our hands, its shape, weight, and the texture of its surface. But by becoming skilled at using the object, our awareness is changed from the effect on our hand to a sense of the tip of the probe or stick that touches other objects. Thus we attend from the proximal (our hands) to the distal (the tip of the object we hold). It is this structure through which we relate to our bodies and surroundings, but also the way a craftsman relates to his tools. When using a hammer, it is the base of the object that we have in our hand, but it is the tip of the object touching the nail that we have a sense of and towards which we attend and correspondingly adjust our hand at the base. The proximal and the distal are held together and both receive their position in our awareness from the meaningful order of the activity we are performing.<sup>634</sup>

It is in this sense that our own body is different from all the other objects around us. Although we can explicitly attend to it, in our normal experience we are aware of it through the way our surroundings affect it. In moving, but also in typing or reading this text, our body is present as proximal of which we can become aware through the activity we perform with it. As a background structure, we become aware of it when we are seated uncomfortably and when we adjust ourselves it recedes again into the background. The tools we use, like the probe or the hammer, by relating to them as the proximal to a distal object, become as it were the extensions of our body. We can say that we incorporate the tools into our body or extend our body to include them. Through this use, the tools change in their character. The probe for

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<sup>632</sup> This is a structure that Gestalt psychology also discerned.

<sup>633</sup> M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*, p. 10. In this part we will follow Polanyi’s analysis.

<sup>634</sup> This meaningful order is what Martin Heidegger calls the “Bewandtnisganzheit”. In his analysis of the use of tools he states that the hammer itself is something we only become aware of as an independent object once it does not work. (M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 76-88)

instance becomes part of our senses *from* which we attend *to* something else. The tools are transformed as they become part of a meaningful structure in which we engage with other objects around us. In getting skilled in their use, we get a tacit understanding of how to sense *through* them. The strange object in our hands of the first time we use it, is transformed into something that has its own ‘natural way’ of engaging with our surroundings. As their use becomes second nature and they recede into our senses or sink into our tacit awareness, the tools are incorporated into our body.<sup>635</sup>

From this we can gain insight into some more mysterious concepts in Asian spirituality and specifically the way they relate to performing certain activities. The Zen Buddhist monk Takuan Sōhō for instance tells a master swordsman that he should become again like a beginner and know nothing<sup>636</sup> and that he should be “emptiness”: “The opponent is Emptiness. I am Emptiness. The hand that holds the sword, the sword itself, is Emptiness. Understand this, but do not let your mind be taken by Emptiness”.<sup>637</sup> It is namely in the training towards becoming a master that the mind is ‘in the body’<sup>638</sup>, in the same way that we at first attend to the probe in our hands. This is the level of discipline, training and seriousness, which is not the highest level. Putting the mind in the touch of the sword, the hand or the eye, inhibits the body’s free functioning. This free functioning only occurs when the body has mastered the craft and the sword is incorporated into the body. Only by disattending from body and sword, “completely oblivious to the hand that wields the sword”<sup>639</sup>, we can be empty. Thus emptiness is a highly focused and active state of being.<sup>640</sup>

### *Attunement: Concentration and Prehension*

We can characterize our way of relating to our surroundings still further by looking at two of its constitutive elements, concentration and prehension. Being attuned or dwelling relates to some kind of internal order that belongs to the activity we are engaged in and which we will

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<sup>635</sup> This ties in with Bruno Latour’s approach of understanding how objects play a central role in the development of the human subject. His understanding of fields like science or religion implies attentiveness to for instance the air pump and the dexterity it requires, as well as stones and statues. (B. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, pp. 82-83 )

<sup>636</sup> T. Sōhō, *The Unfettered Mind: Writings from a Zen Master to a Master Swordsman*, Tokyo, New York and London: Kodansha, 2002 (1986), p. 34

<sup>637</sup> Idem, p. 54

<sup>638</sup> Idem, pp. 30 and 40

<sup>639</sup> Idem, p. 54

<sup>640</sup> Interestingly, this active emptiness has parallels in different fields. Whereas in English ‘to be silent’ is a passive formulation, in languages like German and Dutch, “schweigen” and “zwijgen” are active verbs.

later have to analyze further. A crucial requirement of being attuned is the capacity for concentration. Before having mastered a craft this is very difficult, but not necessarily because of lack of interest, the reason of which we can now grasp clearly. Attunement means that we have extended our senses with proximal objects or movements from which we attend to an internal order. At a low level of skill, this is not yet possible, the internal order is elusive and our focus remains on the getting a grip on the future proximal circumstances. It means in martial arts for instance that we have to practice extensively on 'form' (sets of one-person sequences of movements), or for example in Wing Chun kung fu on the drills of chi sao (which means "sticky hands") in order to sensitize our arms and make them intelligent (give them "localized touch"). The strenuous character of these drills as well as a lack of understanding of the context in which they apply are related to a weak capacity for concentration. A natural and free movement cannot be experienced as these drills have not been incorporated. This is not to say that a skilled person does not run into problems or does not experience an incapacity to do something, but in this case the situation is different. Failure or incapacity does not necessarily lead the skilled person out of the activity, but he or she can still dwell in the activity, even in frustration. A central development in the course of learning something is getting able to concentrate longer. It has even been said by Isaac Stern that the level of someone's skill can be measured by how long that person can engage in the activity without getting bored. It is the earlier experienced joy of moving freely within the natural order that motivates one to stay with a failure. For the novice it will be more tempting to cheat or muffle away the mistake, but on a higher level of achievement we will, ideally, be motivated to correct ourselves. Practice is no longer a means to an end but can be enjoyed for its own sake and the desire for closure can be suspended. The great historian Johan Huizinga has sought to describe life under the aspect of the game or playing, akin to the way we describe free activity here. The 'play character of culture' is not a means to an end, but brings a joy of movement and is done for itself. In play, something 'plays' with us, which places a meaning on the activity.<sup>641</sup>

Another aspect of attunement to the internal order of an activity still has to be discussed here. We have described attunement in terms of attending from something to something else. In a competitive match for instance, a move is interpreted in terms of a future offense. This holds for martial combat and team sports but also for playing chess. With higher levels of skill in chess comes the capacity to see movements in the light of broader patterns and future movements. Being-in-form brings with it a form of anticipation, or put more technically, of prehension. This term derives from the tactile sphere coming from the Latin verb 'prehendere' meaning 'to grasp'. When our hands reach for something, they already anticipate the object. We do not wait until we have physical contact with the object before grasping it, but in advance we anticipate its shape. When reaching for a glass or a door handle, our hands take on a cylindrical shape before the actual contact. Similarly, on a level of deeper embedding, when we are attuned to an activity, we do not wait until something happens to react. This renders our actions clumsy and chaotic like those of the novice. Instead we constantly

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<sup>641</sup> J. Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008, pp. 28-55

anticipate the next step. A musical conductor for instance give his hand gestures slightly ahead of the sound and batting in baseball or cricket requires the batsman to “get ahead of the swing”.<sup>642</sup> When we saw that we can “see something coming” this actually does not refer to the eye observing the act, but to a future unseen act that we apprehend. An element of being attuned to some activity is thus prehension.

## 2). Embedded Self and World: Being-In-Form

### *Being-in-Form*

From the way of relating, we will now turn to the character of world and self in the embedded situation. When discussing attunement as the way of relating, we spoke of an incorporation of objects into the body. When we speak of incorporation, this must not be misunderstood as meaning that an object is absorbed into the mind of the individual, which we saw was characteristic of the rise of subjectivity in Technopolis. When we speak here of incorporation into the body, we refer to the structure of proximals in our surroundings. It is thus that the individual becomes enmeshed into his surroundings. Or put differently, we come to  *dwell*  in them. We come to dwell in a meaningful sphere that makes us attend from certain objects, movements or gestures, to something else, stemming from the activity we are engaging in (whether it is playing football, using a hammer or making music). A pianist is for example not concentrated on the touch of the keys with his fingers, but he dwells  *in*  the piece of music. The touch is tacitly there in the background and is an element of the activity  *from*  which he attends  *to*  something else. It is by concentrating on his fingers that the pianist can temporarily get out of the music and cease his activity.

In the examples of attunement, the self and its world have a different character than in the world of Technopolis, which is what we will argue in the course of this section. Instead of standing against a world on which it bestows value magically, the attuned self finds meaning and value from “being-in” a certain world. And this world is not the totality of neutral objects in empty time and space, but is characterized by a meaningful order of form, with spherical space and rhythmical time.

In order to understand a competitive match, we must not only refer to the capacities of the individuals participating in the activity, but also to the extent to which the participants are attuned and can adapt to the internal order in the activity during the match. This capacity for attunement is strongly dependent on the level of skill. The outcome of a match is easy to predict when there is a wide divergence in the level of skill in the competitors. But when this is not clearly the case, we often do need to refer to the extent to which the participants exhibit

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<sup>642</sup> R. Sennett, *The Craftsman*, pp. 153-155

a form of indwelling characterized by a naturalness of their movements. This is why, especially with highly skilled competitors, the outcome of different matches is not simply transitive. Having won from a certain opponent does not per se imply that one can win from another who lost from this opponent. A natural dwelling in the meaningful order of the activity is what we describe when we say that a team is ‘in form’ or that it has ‘spirit’. The movements then have something natural, unconscious, immediate and unstrained to them and there is a ‘fit’ between the team members. On a non-competitive level, we describe this in love or dancing when we speak of ‘chemistry’. Whereas the detached self that *against* a world on which it bestows value, the attuned self can be described as *being-in* something, a sphere in which it feels at place.<sup>643</sup> It is an experience that is described in many different ways. In sports and creative work it is often described as “being in the zone” or “being in a hot streak” and in music it is experienced as having ‘soul’. When activity feels effortless, we “feel at one with the experience”. The element of feeling a natural fit is expressed when we say that we are “in the groove”, like the grooves of a record, the natural place in which the needle falls. Having done something repeatedly creates patterns in the body which increase the likelihood of its recurrence: “After many similar actions there is a more recognizable groove into which the needle of behavior seems to fall automatically”.<sup>644</sup> In this sense, the behavior becomes second nature. Yet another way to describe this sense of being carried and being at home in something is “being in the flow”. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has done extensive research into the experience of flow. It is something that can be experienced in a wide range of activities from playing chess to reading a book, from weaving a rug to singing in a group and performing a religious ritual. Csikszentmihalyi argues that two dimensions determine the experience of flow. These are the combination of possessing a high level of skill with experiencing great challenges. Lacking both challenges and skill at something goes together with an experience of apathy. (This compares with the experience of meaningless that came with the stance of detachment.) Possessing skill at something but not being challenged does not lead to flow, but instead to relaxation or boredom. On the other hand, great challenges without a high level of skill lead to anxiety and worry. When challenges and skills match, when the goals are clear and there is relevant feedback, attention becomes ordered and our psychic energy is completely focused, leaving no room for side thoughts to distract us. So in flow self-consciousness disappears while at the same time the self is highly focused.<sup>645</sup> Just like in the play metaphor we drew from Johan Huizinga, in flow we are so absorbed that the activity gives a high degree of pleasure. Activities that involve play and flow are done for their own sake. They are self-justificatory.<sup>646</sup> A further way to approach these phenomena is

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<sup>643</sup> The idea that *In-Sein* constitutes a central element of human existence was developed by Martin Heidegger and followed by several thinkers subsequently. Here we will develop this idea into a different direction.

<sup>644</sup> W.T. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, p. 73

<sup>645</sup> M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Finding Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life*, New York, Basic Books, 1997, pp. 30-32

<sup>646</sup> Activities that are often experienced as straining or instrumental are thus transformed. Csikszentmihalyi describes that this is how highly creative leaders or Nobel Prize winners relate to their work, subscribing to the

through W.T. Gallwey's distinction into two selves, which forms the basis of his training theory. Self 1 is what he describes as the internal observer and critique of our behavior. It makes the admonishments to improve, it judges actions and it seeks to learn and change through words or a cognitive approach. Self 2 is the unconscious self that performs actions and is tied up with the body. It learns through touch, does not judge and learns more through images. The rise of subjectivity, the punctual self and the outsider perspective on the self are elements of the world of Technopolis and could be seen as an extension of Self 1. The core of Gallwey training method is to quiet Self 1 as much as possible and let Self 2 perform its natural learning. What is further important for our investigation here is that the two selves have different orientations. Satisfying Self 1 is the experience of control, paralleling the magical aspiration of all-might. The satisfaction of Self 2 on the other hand, lies in the experience of flow. Success for the former means ego satisfaction, whereas for the latter, in the experience of flow, self-consciousness dissolves. Instead of giving oneself credit, it concerns more a letting go, a relaxation that allows things to happen, rather than actively seeking to make it happen.<sup>647</sup>

This natural and immediate character of these activities is also why Pierre Bourdieu (to whom we will return more elaborately later) objects to a communicative interpretation of practice.<sup>648</sup> Seeing practices as a process of decoding messages is an outsider ("Self 1") perspective on what is going on. When dealing with a foreign language, we have to unpack what is said for the listener, which contrasts with the directness of speaking in one's mother tongue. The communicative model interprets action in terms of a repertoire of rules or the use of a map. This holds for the unskilled who lacks mastery of a practice or the foreigner who has to place another's actions against a possible set of rules and who has to map himself in abstract space. In our terms, when engaged in collective practice, the participants do not focus on messages they have to unpack and that stand *between* them and the others, but instead they attend away from these signs to the sphere *in* which all are enclosed and in which they dwell.

This being-in-form is described by Bourdieu as "pure practice without theory"<sup>649</sup>, "a *mimesis*, a sort of symbolic gymnastics, like the rite or the dance" and of which he also says that it is "something which communicates, so to speak, from body to body, i.e. on the hither side of words or concepts, and which pleases (or displeases) without concepts".<sup>650</sup>

The difference between the position of outsider and Being-in-Form can be clarified by how Bourdieu distinguishes ways of orienting oneself. Whereas the foreigner constantly has to

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adagium "you could say that I worked every minute of my life or you could say with equal justice that I never worked a day". (Idem, p. 61)

<sup>647</sup> W.T. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, pp. 68 and 80-81

<sup>648</sup> P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009 (1972), pp. 1-15

<sup>649</sup> Quoting E. Durkheim, *Education and Sociology*, New York: The Free Press, 1956 (1922), p. 101

<sup>650</sup> P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, p. 2



position his place on an abstract map on which all positions are equal, the native will work from a practical space of lived journeys and often will even have a hard time recognizing familiar places on a map. We can compare this learning how to dance. In dancing courses, like ballroom, the teaching will involve a great amount of verbal instructions. Beginners will have to learn the pace of movements by counting and sequences by thinking about what comes next. This can be contrasted with the way people learn to dance on a dance floor, especially teenagers. There are no verbal instructions here, but learning happens through imitation. Seeing another perform new moves, attentive looking at them and letting oneself be drawn in into the feel of the moves, allows this mimesis. Very complex moves that in words would amount to large sets of instructions are learned in action as a whole. When we are being-in-something, when we are attuned to the forms around us, we have the capacity for *visual absorption*. As a taekwondo teacher, I noticed this same phenomenon, especially with younger students. My master told me to always do the instructed movement in front of the class instead of relying much on verbal instructions. Not looking at specific parts of the movements I was doing or thinking about them, one could see these students were visually absorbing what their teacher was doing, grasping the energy from the teacher and letting themselves feel the movement from ‘within’.

Thus we can see that in Embeddedness or Dwelling, the self does not stand against something in a detached manner, but has to be described in terms of being-in-something. This “something” is not a neutralized world in empty space and time. Rather, the world has a meaningful internal order that makes it possible for us to feel flow or get in the zone. The world of dwelling is characterized by meaningful forms we can absorb and follow, so that world and self in dwelling can be described as being-in-form. Both space and time differ from the way they exist in the world of Technopolis.

### *The Spherical Character of Space*

In Technopolis, we can describe the relationship towards objects in space as confrontational. This has to be understood in terms of a way of relating that is detached, placing us against the world. This contrast with the being-in of attunement that can be described as non-confrontational. We are not placed against an aggregate of objects or people, but instead move within a tacit web of relations that gives our actions meaning.<sup>651</sup>

Richard Sennett describes how such an experience emerged in Chinese history in the field of cooking, which can give us insight into the character of space in embeddedness. As knives

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<sup>651</sup> Of course as we encountered already in competitive activities there is confrontation and in Technopolis a desiring relationship could be described as non-confrontational, but this is not the sense in which we here use the terms. When we speak here of a non-confrontational relationship, it is in the sense that participants move ‘within’ something, which we will elaborate on in the following. This also holds for competitive activity.

can of course serve as weapons, a need was felt in ancient China to do something that would make the world of eating less threatening. At the table this was done through the usage of chopsticks and in the kitchen the normal knife was replaced with the cleaver. This is an instrument which is quite blunt at the end, so it could not be used for stabbing, but sharp at the edge. With the cleaver, the manner of the preparation of food changed. The Chinese cook does not use the cleaver in a hammering movement, where we basically through force beat the food into submission. The cook makes a more circular movement from the elbow that pushes the whole forearm and hand, so that the cleaver falls into its object. At the moment of impact, the forearm contracts again and this way relieves the arm of pressure.<sup>652</sup> It is a way in which a rhythmical motion using minimal force replaces confrontational blunt force.

The importance of this experience was seen and taken up in Chinese thought. In the Taoist text the *Chuang Tzu*, the example of a cook describes the difference between being-in-something that carries one and standing confrontational to something as follows: “Cook Ting laid down his knife and replied. What I care about is the Way, which goes beyond skill. When I first began cutting up oxen, all I could see was the oxen itself. After three years I no longer saw the whole oxen. And now – now I go at it by spirit and don’t look with my eyes. Perception and understanding have come to a stop and the spirit moves where it wants.”<sup>653</sup> Rather than having the oxen stands against him as an object to manipulate, the cook is attuned to something in which he moves naturally: “Every blow of his hand, every heave of his shoulders, every tread of his foot, every thrust of his knee, every *whshh* of rent flesh, every *chhk* of the chopper, was in perfect harmony, - rhythmical like the dance of the Mulberry Grove, simultaneous like the chords of the Ching Shou.”<sup>654</sup> The text describes what we have also called attunement to a natural harmony, being in flow and moving within a meaningful order.

The concept of yielding, not out of weakness but from following the natural harmony, plays an important role in Taoism and is expressed in the theme of being like water: “The highest good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures; yet itself does not scramble, but is content with the places that all men disdain”<sup>655</sup>. Its yielding character also makes it strong: “What is of all things most yielding, can overwhelm that which is of all things most hard.”<sup>656</sup> Effortless movement by following a natural order is also central to another Asian tradition, that of Zen Buddhism. The German philosophy professor Eugen Herrigel went to Japan in the 1920’s to study Zen by learning the ancient art of archery. When his effort keeps failing, he is admonished by his teacher to be like a little child,

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<sup>652</sup> R. Sennett, *The Craftsman*, pp. 165-167. Interestingly, it is the same way a punch is delivered in several kung fu styles.

<sup>653</sup> H.A. Giles, *Teachings and Sayings of Chuang Tzu*, New York: Mineola, 2001 (1909), p. 27

<sup>654</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>655</sup> Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1997, p. 8

<sup>656</sup> *Idem*, p. 46

unselfconsciously, without purpose. Instead of willfully seeking to let the arrow go at a certain moment, he should let himself be carried so that his hand would “burst open like the skin of ripe fruit”.<sup>657</sup> The already mentioned Zen Buddhist text on swordsmanship also emphasizes this quality of yielding by making the comparison with water: “In not remaining in one place, the Right Mind is like water. The Confused Mind is like ice, and ice is unable to wash hands or head. When ice is melted, it becomes water and flows everywhere, and it can wash hands, the feet or anything else. (...) It is like water overflowing and exists within itself. It appears appropriately when facing a time of need”<sup>658</sup>.

Our relationship to our surrounding changes when we, intentionally or unintentionally, are moved outside of the order we dwell in. When we address something from the outside, this different perspective can have different bearings on the structure of being in it. It can be used intentionally as a way to improve our dwelling in it.<sup>659</sup> This is the case when an athlete calls in scientists to analyze his or her movements. Scientists could then point out how something could be done differently to improve the effect. Taking note of this advice, the athlete can then reincorporate this knowledge in the tacit movements. Similarly, getting more knowledge of the particular aspects of a painting can increase our enjoyment of it when we return to dwell in it. Secondly however, the outside perspective can also destroy our capacity to dwell in something. This is what happens when something is overanalyzed. The early Nietzsche for instance argued that modern scientific historical research was making it impossible to have a living relationship with the past.<sup>660</sup> Alternatively, the outside perspective can make explicit what we find if we focus on particular features rather than dwell in the whole. This is the case with the knowledge of natural science. The skillful handling of the body stands next to the doctor’s knowledge of the body.

The articulation and retrieval of a way of relating that is different from the outsider perspective has as we mentioned, been a central concern of the philosophical school of phenomenology since Martin Heidegger. He from a different angle spoke of the structure of being-in-something (*In-Sein*) and a meaningful order in which things refer to each other (*Bewandtnisganzheit*).<sup>661</sup> Closer to our discussion here stands a later philosopher in this tradition, Peter Sloterdijk. In his work, he particularly focuses on interpersonal relations and

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<sup>657</sup> E. Herrigel, *Zen and the Art of Archery*, New York: Vintage Books, 1999 (1953), pp. 30-31. There is dispute about the correctness of Herrigel’s interpretation of Zen, but for our discussion here this is less relevant than the insight into acting without purpose or self-consciousness.

<sup>658</sup> T. Sōhō, *The Unfettered Mind*, pp. 48-9. In Taoism and Zen Buddhism, this idea of yielding or letting is also expressed in the attention that is drawn to the emptiness that constitutes a valley or a vase as well as the looseness of the wheels of the cart which make its circular movement possible. See also idem, p. 49

<sup>659</sup> M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*, p. 19

<sup>660</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen: Zweites Stück: Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben’, in: *Die Geburt der Tragödie, Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen: Kritische Studienausgabe*, G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999, pp. 243-334

<sup>661</sup> M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 76-88

understands human life in terms of forms, or what he calls “spheres”. The introduction of his trilogy *Spheres* opens with a discussion of a painting by G.H. Every in which a bubble-blowing child is depicted.<sup>662</sup> His description shows how the child cannot be understood as a subject placed against his surroundings. Instead the intensity of hope, melancholy and joy in the child make that he is intensely attuned to the bubbles he blows. The child stands outside himself in attentiveness (*Ekstase der Aufmerksamkeit*). The space between the child and the bubbles is a living space (*beseelte Raum*). Throughout the first part of *Sphären*, Peter Sloterdijk describes different fields in which we can see the structures of being-in-something and which are examples of what we here call embedded existence.

The meaningful structure we have been trying to articulate is something Sloterdijk articulates in relation to the space between people, for instance that between faces. This is also *beseelte Raum*, in the sense that we are tacitly drawn to and away from faces, but can also be drawn into them. It is (to paraphrase) to see the interfacial space not as a vacuum or a neutral in-between, but as a by turbulent radiations filled force field.<sup>663</sup> Against the belief in an autonomous subject, the interpersonal space we dwell in is full of symbiotic, erotic and mimetic-competitive energies. The living space between faces is intense between lovers, but present at every level. Whenever we approach someone, we shine out those radiations that show our intent. Just asking someone the way on the street requires a complex set of actions: we adjust our tone, create an open expression, show our hands and adjust our posture, actions to make the person walking on the street stop and assist us. These are complex trained activities in which our faces and gestures provide contextuality and indexicality.<sup>664</sup> This is particularly the case between people who are well-acquainted with each other. On meeting, the faces draw to each other in expectation and assume the expression that is typical of their interaction. From these expressions, they can be absorbed into the atmosphere that is common to them. We immediately sense it when others have this common sphere with its tactical attunement and we often need a stranger present to become aware of the sphere we share with others. These facial expressions can also be accompanied with a specific localized humor that others do not understand. The complete simultaneity of a group bursting out into laughter expresses their common indwelling. Bursting out into laughter together spatially feels like the common atmosphere is poured out over us. This is also why laughter, no matter how inconsequential its topic, serves to bring people together as it draws them into the common sphere. In meetings between strangers the cognitive transfer of messages by itself does not lead to a feeling of naturalness and flow. In Gallwey’s terms, between strangers Self 1 is strongly present. We are concerned with reading signs, thinking ahead of what to say and there is a strong sense of self-consciousness. Through laughter or other means, Self 1 can be

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<sup>662</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Sphären I*, pp. 17-19

<sup>663</sup> Idem, p. 146

<sup>664</sup> From his courtly background, 16<sup>th</sup> century writer Baltasar Gracián greatly describes the importance of the way something is done, next to the thing itself. (B. Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, Boston and London: Shambhala, 2004) See also Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 57

quieted, after which one gets into a common sphere in which the sense of naturalness comes from the free activity of Self 2. It is also a common experience that one can only truly listen to someone else if the mind is free. Not only distracting thoughts about something else, but also ulterior thoughts about the very conversation lead one out of the present moment of common understanding. Wanting something from the conversation or clinging on to something said, can make that we hear another's words without feeling their bearing.

When we look at interpersonally being 'in', we can also think of the magnetic personality that draws us into him or her. It is a powerful feeling that energizes us and pulls us towards an exemplar like a certain teacher or public personality. In this sense we often speak of natural leaders or spontaneous organization in groups. Drawn to someone we feel an energizing radiance. The attraction lies in a natural stream or flow that we feel emanating from them, the close presence to which gives us energy. It breaks the hold of the outsider self (who seeks control) and lets the active self free (who experiences flow). This also happens in crowds or in disco's when someone energizes those around him or her.

The term that Sloterdijk thus connects to this living space is the "sphere". It is the 'roundness' that people inhabit that is an interior, is developed and shared.<sup>665</sup> Being creatures that are open to their surroundings, the sphere is the way we incorporate the exterior in a felt home, whether it is a physical house or an empire.<sup>666</sup> Important for our concerns is to emphasize that we not understand the sphere as the mathematical object, but more like an atmosphere, in the sense that it does not have the character of an object. Following Thomas Macho, Sloterdijk speaks of 'Nobjects'.<sup>667</sup> Not being positioned against us as objects, it is also non-invasive. It is something that is fluid, that surrounds and carries us, or in our words, something we dwell in.

Dutch philosopher Ad Verbrugge in his 'ethological' characterization of the life world, in a comparative way, but from a different background speaks of the spherical character of life. On the basis of his interpretation of Aristotle, he describes the importance of the ethos to human life. Ethos refers on the one hand to a certain place that an animal or man is used to inhabiting. But on the other hand it also refers to a disposition, or a way of being attuned (*ingesteld-zijn*) of the human soul. From our way of attunement, the place is experienced as being animated (having *bezieling*). So when we seek to communicate something about our home or another place that we are particularly accustomed to, we cannot do this by way of a physical description of the building and the objects in it. 'Home' is not an object that we can objectively bring before ourselves. It is a sphere around which we need to circle to bring it to light. We need to characterize scenes through which our own relation to home become apparent and see if the other can be brought into this sphere we are describing. It are novels

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<sup>665</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Sphären I*, p. 28

<sup>666</sup> The human house is then not an object, but an emotionally charged atmosphere with its own directionality. Behavior and moods are connected with the sphere of a house. As Csikzentmihalyi states, men are for instance drawn to basements, whereas women tend to evade them. M. Csikzentmihalyi, *Finding Flow*, p. 44

<sup>667</sup> P. Sloterdijk, *Sphären I*, p. 300

and poems, not theoretical descriptions that can bring forth a sphere.<sup>668</sup> This spherical notion of space brings us to another important element, namely of activity as ‘circling’. We circle around the important fields and persons of our lives. They are not transparent objects, but focal points we cannot oversee entirely. In a circling motion, we move around them in which they have their depth. Something that is not circled around, deepened spherically, but instead is readily at our disposal becomes a phenomenon without depth. As Verbrugge shows, in Dutch when we say that something loses its meaning for us (becomes “wezenloos”), we also say that it loses its essence (“wezen”). An object at our disposal can be fully described, but this way we actually remain at its surface. Not circling around it or dwelling in it, we lose the depth of our surrounding.<sup>669</sup>

### *The Rhythmical Character of Time*

Attunement is thus the way of relating that is characteristic of embeddedness. The self and the world are conjoined into something we have called being-in-form. The world, or our surrounding then have a meaningful ordered structure. For the dimension of space we saw that it is spherical when one is embedded or dwelling. The dimension of time, to which we will turn here can in the embedded situation be described as rhythmical. Being-in-form, moving within the internal order of a certain activity is strongly connected with a sense of time, or more precisely, with timing.

When discussing concentration, we saw the value of doing drills as through it we incorporate moves or tools into our body. Especially for the novice, this can seem like a mind-numbing activity of pure and simple repetition. As concentration and engagement increase however, it takes on a different character. What the student learns is to find out the exact conditions under which an effect is reproduced. Through failure, the student learns what does and what does not produce the same tone from a key of the piano for instance, or a good pass in soccer. It is in fact a training in understanding sameness and difference in the activity. Rather than being dull repetition, drilling gets a kind of narrative structure by showing improvement in understanding the conditions under which a certain result is produced. It is an outsider perspective to see the repetition as only a means to an end or a necessary evil to be minimized as much as possible. From routine, one learns the right movement at the right time, making the student capable of modulating the activity from within. Through a concentrated focus on feeling what happens when a good result is produced, a student can come to experience what is “the right touch”.

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<sup>668</sup> A.M. Verbrugge, *De verwaarlozing van het zijnde*, pp. 166-167

<sup>669</sup> And as Gracián writes: “The thing itself and the way it is done. Substance is not enough, attention to circumstance is also required. A bad manner spoils everything – even reason and justice – a good one supplies everything, gilds, even sweetens truth, and adds a touch of beauty to old age itself. The how plays a large part in affairs, a good manner steals people’s hearts. Fine behavior is a joy in life, and a pleasant expression can help you out of a difficult situation in a remarkable way. B. Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, p. 8

What this practicing to make something come back at a later moment tells us about the internal order of an activity, is that it has *rhythm*. Being able to do something well is not just about having certain capacities of which the expression is secondary. It is the expression that is itself central, because capacities only work if they can be utilized at the right time by following a rhythm. When one focuses exclusively on a certain act or its immediate effect, an activity can become very exhausting. A feeling that novices often have when learning something is that they have some physical disadvantage that hinders them from learning a skill, making them for instance simply not fast enough.

However, we experience that when we do something in a certain rhythm we can surprise ourselves about our endurance or capacities. What is at first experienced as a chaos of stimuli one is always too late at responding too, becomes ordered through a rhythm. Instead of being exhausted by anxiously chasing stimuli, one can then even have the time to focus on particular elements within the rhythm. In other words, we come to experience a slowing down of time.

A very powerful manifestation of rhythm is when it is collective. The singing of soldiers when they are jogging is a literal expression of rhythm. It is through this singing that the weight in their legs is forgotten. In my experience as a taekwondo teacher, I have noticed the same. When given the instruction to repeat a kick individually, fatigue easily sets in with the students. When doing kicks as a group, but in their own tempo, the same applies. But when the instruction is followed by synchronized movements and exclamations, the students get lifted into a collective form in which they can continue the activity for a much longer period of time. This collective lifting up (or a feeling which in music we would call “soul”) is described by Roger Scruton in relation to the activity of hunting and for him also extends between the species of men, horses and hounds. An interesting suggestion he makes is that this experience of collective rhythm has its origins in the “pre-modern herd”. Before high civilization, we had through the generations become attuned to the movement of a rhythmical herd.<sup>670</sup>

But the rhythmical character of time also holds for individual activities. Measuring distance in jogging or counting laps in swimming is terribly exhausting. But when the goal-orientation recedes and we find a rhythm of movement, we are capable of doing much more. In activities that require continuous response to someone or something (like a tennis ball), improvement can result from simply thinking of a rhythm like “da...da...da”.<sup>671</sup> In this sense, time is not the sequence of neutral and discrete moments, but the moments are intimately connected to each other or fulfill each other. This sheds light on what Takuan Sōhō mysteriously describes as

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<sup>670</sup> As he writes: “In those centaur hours, however, real life returns to you. For a brief ecstatic moment the blood of another species flows through your veins, stirring the old deposits of collective life, releasing pockets of energy that a million generations laboriously harvested from the crop of human suffering.” (R. Scruton, *On Hunting*, South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 1998, p. 69)

<sup>671</sup> W.T. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, pp. 63 and 86

the “interval into which not even a hair can be put”<sup>672</sup>. Moments do not follow each other discretely, but are part of a singular flow.<sup>673</sup>

The same applies to less physical activities like learning a foreign language. At first, this has to consist of rote learning: lists of words and rules of grammar. Translation initially will be mechanical. But through acquaintance, rhythm can be found in the language in the form of cadence and prosody. Skill in reading a language, like the dead languages Latin and ancient Greek will foster a sense for the tempo of literary texts, making it possible to understand and anticipate the wordings of distant writers.

The difference between an instrumental and forceful approach and an approach in which an internal order is attuned to by following a rhythm can also be discerned in other spheres. Modern medicine was for instance greatly moved forward with the replacement of the butcher’s knife with the scalpel. This more delicate instrument made possible a more sensitive approach to natural order in which less force was required. Instead of the old method of letting a student chop away for the physician, Andreas Vesalius used the scalpel himself through which a much better understanding of the human body was developed.<sup>674</sup>

*The anatomy of Andreas Vesalius. With the scalpel greater attunement to the human body became possible*<sup>675</sup>



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<sup>672</sup> T. Sōhō, *The Unfettered Mind*, p. 38

<sup>673</sup> As he states: “This is not a matter of clapping your hands, thinking about yelling, and then doing so, which would result in there being an interval in between. You clap your hands and, just at that instant, let out a sound.” (Idem)

<sup>674</sup> R. Sennett, *The Craftsman*, pp. 197-199

<sup>675</sup> Source: <http://beheerpagina.web-log.nl/services/trackback/6a0133eeca7415970b0133eeca74bd970b>



An important aspect of the rhythmical character of embedded life comes from the human body itself. Breathing and the heart beat are natural rhythms that even if we try, we cannot stop. Professional athletes but especially old Asian practices like yoga or tai chi focus specifically on the act of breathing. Breath follows a natural rhythm and by focusing on it, the mind can come to rest and dwell completely in the present moment. Panic or unskilled activity goes together with the tense holding of breath at the time of a physical exertion and the gasping for breath afterwards.<sup>676</sup> In skilled activity however, a natural and slow rhythm of breathing can be maintained even in the face of the most demanding physical actions.<sup>677</sup>

The rhythmical character of embedding is also expressed over larger scales of time. Psychic well-being and getting into the flow of certain activities is tied up with the rhythms of daily life.<sup>678</sup> We saw that in modernity the sense of time is scattered in the infinite activities of separate people. Nevertheless, most people on a personal level have all kinds of daily rituals, as simple as reading the newspaper in the morning, that order their life. And on a broader scale, we saw that in modernity time becomes neutral, as we seek to make any type of action possible at any moment in life. This stands against the idea of a life-cycle connected with rites of passage. The Indian idea of *samskaras* is about the right rite at the right time:

The conceptualization of the human life cycle unfolding in a series of stages, with each stage having its unique “tasks” and the need for an orderly progression through the stages, is an established part of traditional Indian thought...one of the major thrusts of these rituals is the gradual integration of the child into society, with the *samskaras*, as it were, beating time to a measured movement that takes the child away from the original mother-infant symbiosis into the full-fledged membership of its community.<sup>679</sup>

Pierre Bourdieu gives an example of how attuning to an internal order that has rhythm applies to interpersonal interaction by looking at the dynamic of the exchange of gifts. Getting a gift places an obligation on the receiver of the gift to reciprocate. However, this is not an abstract obligation that can be fulfilled at any time. Returning a gift immediately will be experienced as ingratitude as one has not truly received the gift. Waiting too long can make the receiver seem incapable of reciprocating and reduce his standing. The receiver has to play with timing, looking for the right moment to offer his gift. Time is not empty and homogenous, but is

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<sup>676</sup> In martial arts, the holding of one’s breath because of an attack of the opponent, means a ‘freezing’ of oneself and as such implies getting stuck in the past (the fear of the attack). Maintaining a natural breath on the other hand is seen as remaining in the fleeting present moment in the Buddhist detachment from objects around us.

<sup>677</sup> And in the Dutch language a way to say that something is correct is saying that it beats (“het klopt”). Whether we connect it with the heart beat or some other beat, the expression connects correctness with rhythm.

<sup>678</sup> M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Finding Flow*, p. 41

<sup>679</sup> Sadhir Kakar, as quoted in *Finding Flow*, pp. 79-80

filled and has its own efficacy. Time has an irreversibility on which has to be acted at the right moment. Delay can be used strategically by changing the tempo of an exchange, whether it concerns a gift or an act of vengeance. Playing with the uncertainty of time is what we do when we act with strategy. The filled and rhythmic character of time is something we express when we say that “time is on our side” or that it works against us.<sup>680</sup>

### 3). The Dynamic of Embedding in World and Self

#### *The World as Tao*

The constitutive elements of the world of embeddedness are thus a self that is characterized by being-in, a world that consists of forms in spherical space and rhythmical time, and a way of relating we have called attunement. From these constitutive elements we will conclude with a broader perspective on what the joint dynamic is of these elements. Just like with Technopolis where we saw that the elements combined led to a permanent reorganization and transformation of both world and self, we will look here how the world as a whole and mankind's place in it are constituted in the world as embedding or dwelling.

Whereas in Technopolis nothing has a natural place and everything that is solid melts into air, in the world as a dwelling there is an idea and experience of the world as a whole that is governed by a natural order that gives everything its place. We find such an idea expressed in many pre-modern cultures. In the novels of Carlos Castaneda a Western anthropologist follows the teaching of an American-Indian. At one point, the teacher tells the anthropologist to go out into nature until his ‘ally’ presents himself to him. The story brings out the profound difference with the technopolitical view of the world. The reader is haunted by the arbitrariness of this task.<sup>681</sup> How could nature send a sign? And if he got a sign, would this not just be a piece of luck in which we project our beliefs on a purely natural phenomenon? Throughout the novels natural signs are presented, for instance through the ecstatic experience

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<sup>680</sup> P. Bourdieu, *An Outline of a Theory of Practice*, pp. 6-7. Using a metaphor that is reminiscent of Machiavelli, Gracián also expresses this ‘filled’ concept of time: “It is a great piece of skill to know how to guide your luck even while waiting for it. For something is accomplished by just waiting to use it at the proper moment, since it has periods and offers opportunities – though one cannot calculate its path because its steps are so irregular. When you find fortune favorable, stride boldly forward, for she favors the bold, and being a woman, the young. But if you have bad luck, withdraw so as not to redouble the influence of your unlucky star.” (B. Gracián, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, p. 21)

<sup>681</sup> C. Castaneda, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998 (1968)

of using peyote. The reader is often tempted to believe in these natural signs while also continuously doubting their veracity and seeing them as the hallucinations of a drug-using subject.

When describing activities like sports or crafts we found a natural meaningful order inherent in the activity. What we are dealing with here is the sense of the world as a whole being ‘in-form’ or ‘in tune’. In Shakespeare’s play *Julius Caesar*, Casca expresses the view of a natural order in the world as a whole. Wrongdoing in the world of men has stirred up the weather, making it a sign of a world that has come out of tune:

I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds have riv’d the knotty oaks; and I have seen the ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam, to be exalted with the threat’ning clouds: But never till to-night, never till now, did I go through a tempest dropping fire. Either there is civil strife in heaven, or else the world, too saucy with the gods, incenses them to send destruction. (...) When these prodigies do so conjointly meet, let not men say ‘These are their reasons, they are natural;’ For, I believe, they are portentous things unto the climate that they point upon.<sup>682</sup>

Such an understanding of a meaningful order that runs through human life as well as the cosmos, was expressed in early Hinduism with the concept of *Rta*. It is the ritual pattern of the natural and the supernatural which is expressed in the cosmic order, the human virtues as well as in religious ceremony. It is man’s task to live in accordance with *Rta*, which in all these cases is associated with truth or correspondence to reality.<sup>683</sup> *Rta* expresses a fundamental congruence between man’s activity (moral as well as aesthetic) on the one hand, and a metaphysics, (expressing the way the world fundamentally is) on the other. It concerns, in Clifford Geertz’ terms, the congruence between an ethos and a world view. In Javanese culture, something similar is expressed with the term *tjotjog*. The term means ‘to fit’ and can be ascribed to a multitude of situations. It is the fitting of a key to a lock, but also of a medicine to a disease, a solution to a problem, a man happily married to a woman, as well as tasty food, correct theories and good manners. It expresses not only the sense of a natural order, but also that two things when joined together can get a meaning which they both do not have separately. When they ‘fit’ a coherent pattern is formed that strikes a chord. If there is no fit, it leads to dissonance.<sup>684</sup> A more well-known concept, which we have already come across in our discussion above is the Chinese term *Tao*, which is central in Taoism as well as Confucianism. It is the force that animates everything and as translated as both the Way as well as principle. Being the way of the world, it is also that which man has to live in accordance with: “Of the things brought about by the rites, harmony is the most valuable.”<sup>685</sup>

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<sup>682</sup> W. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Bath, Somerset: Robert Frederick Ltd., 2000, pp. 17-18

<sup>683</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001 (1943), p. 17

<sup>684</sup> C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books, 1973, pp. 129-130

<sup>685</sup> Confucius, *The Analects*, London: Penguin Books, 1979, p. 61

The Japanese Zen Buddhist Takuan Sōhō describes the congruence of the world order and the world of men as follows: “Right-mindedness is a matter of extreme importance. Its substance is none other than the Principle of Heaven, which gives life to all things. When this is acquired by the human body, it is called one’s nature. Its other names are virtue, the Way, human-heartedness, probity and propriety.”<sup>686</sup>

What all these concepts express is that there is an order in the world that we need to be attuned to. These concepts do not refer to a theoretical and purely metaphysical interpretation of the world, as the modern thinkers of the Enlightenment often presented it and as many contemporary atheists conceive of it. It is an order that is lived and experienced, not as a cognitive operation or deduction, but in the fitting together of two people, a harmonious ritual, or by unconsciously being carried in a skillfully mastered practice. The metaphysical concepts are made plausible in practice, being experienced as a form of common sense. On the other hand, human activity is made deeply meaningful by the expressed metaphysics. An embedded way of living or morality is not a set of rules that we can choose to adopt and project on the world ( as in Technopolis). It is something that commands assent as it comes from the nature of the world. It is made plausible in practice and the right actions and judgments are merited by the world. With a term like Tao we want to convey in dwelling the world as a whole becomes a home to man. This is to be contrasted with the world of Technopolis. Starting from Heidegger, Scruton writes hyperbolically: “(...) his thought contains the truth about modern architecture, which is an architecture of people who no longer build for the sake of dwelling. The modern city, with its through-roads and street-lights and shopping centres, with its industrial parks and office towers, is nothing but the waste thrown down by careless nomads.”<sup>687</sup> Entire cities are “brought into being by the desire to be somewhere else”.<sup>688</sup> Indeed, Heidegger had the same concern, stating that the modern housing distress (*Wohnungsnot*) is not about the effects of war, the growth of the population or the situation of industrial workers, which then could be helped by planned construction. This distress deals with a more primary concern of the world as a place for dwelling (*Wohnen*).<sup>689</sup>

### *The tactile Self in Consonance*

In our discussion of the rhythmical character of time, we saw that embeddedness concerns a skillful playing with time. Dwelling means being able to slow time and speed up its pace,

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<sup>686</sup> T. Sōhō, *The Unfettered Mind*, p. 71

<sup>687</sup> R. Scruton, *On Hunting*, p. 102

<sup>688</sup> Ibidem

<sup>689</sup> M. Heidegger, *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken*, in: *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2009 (1954), pp. 154-156

being able to wait for its fulfillment and exploit its directionality. In other words, we have to work with time strategically. Next to the typical chess game, this is particularly well exemplified at the macro-level in international relations. Strategy, seen as the playing with the rhythmical motion of time, is the essence of diplomacy. At the heights of the Cold War, rational choice theorists sought to formalize international relations in mathematical models, in effect placing it in homogenous and empty time and space. In the end however, diplomacy is an art, rather than an exact science and it is intimately tied up with timing. It operates in ‘filled’ time and space. The capacity that this strategic action requires is *tact*. Although force and military capacity matter greatly, it is a web of tact that holds international relations together. Rather than using force directly, this means using the threat of force, influencing other’s perceptions, building alliances as well as counter-alliances. It does not just concern in Gracián’s words “the thing itself”, but also “the way it is done”. Tactful action is bound up with etiquette. Careful wordings are chosen and messages are often veiled or intentionally ambiguous. Leaders and diplomatic corps use a wide range of tools to test opponents and allies. Exhibiting tact means being able to balance hard power with soft power. Influence especially the status of global hegemony cannot rest solely on military strength. It has to be supplemented with softer tools of power as well as by a willingness to follow. Just like “between faces”, dominance comes from a radiance that draws others in its orbit. Tact as following forms of etiquette and holding oneself back is not born from lack of capacity. Rather, it is the fine art of getting things done without using force or even without asking for them.

Whereas in dwelling, the world as a whole is a home or what we alternatively have described as Tao, the place of man in the world is defined by tact leading to a sense of consonance. Oswald Spengler was the philosopher who thematized the concept of tact and he was the first to show the centrality of ‘the tactile dimension’ to human life. In *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, Spengler argues that tact is a fundamental feature of all life.<sup>690</sup> What he calls ‘cosmic tact’ has to do with other concepts like directionality, time, rhythm, longing and destiny. All moving creatures, humans and animals alike are characterized by ‘tension’ (*Spannung*), which comes from the creature’s engagement with opposition from its surroundings. The sense of the own body induces tenseness or irritability with regard to the environment of the living being. Tact however, is something that lingers under our state of tenseness and which at times can dissolve all tension in a powerfully felt sense of consonance (*Einklang*). Examples of this consonance are the silent understanding between lovers, the strategic actions of a capable diplomat, the eye of a collector of valuable objects, but also the tact of a noble society that is master of its forms and etiquette, moving freely within them.

This sense of tact and consonance that we see in certain people is the same as what we can observe in the natural world, according to Spengler.

The free movement and consonance between animals (or a ‘being-in-form’) can for instance be seen in the controlled movement of a well-bred horse, but also in the movement of a pack

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<sup>690</sup> O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, München: C.H. Beck, 1998 (1923), p. 559

of birds, in the way it flies up, moves and changes course naturally and completely synchronously. This consonant motion, immediate turning of directionality and natural regrouping of the pack is a cosmic tact that we also see on the field of a professional basketball match. Tactile movement in consonance is expressed by a basketball player for the Boston Celtics quoted by Gallwey: “At that special level all sorts of odd things happened.... It was almost as if we were playing in slow motion. During those spells I could almost sense how the next play would develop and where the next shot would be taken. Even before the other team brought the ball in bounds, I could feel it so keenly that I’d want to shout to my team-mates, ‘It’s coming there!’- except that I knew everything would change if I did. My premonitions would be consistently correct, and I always felt then that I not only knew all the Celtics by heart but also all the opposing players, and that they all knew me.”<sup>691</sup> The tactile dimension of life concerns in Gallwey’s terms the skilful activity of Self 2, when the outsider perspective of Self 1 is quieted. In Technopolis, the outsider perspective of the punctual self seeks control and reorganizes and transforms the self’s raw material. Instead of control, tactility is about letting go in order to be carried by a world of forms. Activity can then be done with utter abandon and we experience effortless effort. From the feeling of consonance, self-consciousness can even entirely disappear and it can seem that one is not doing an activity oneself, but something else is doing it. Instead of controlling self and world, embeddedness finds a meaningful order in which things and people have their natural place. Rather than controlling neutral objects, the issue is here to let this natural order be.<sup>692</sup> Like a gardener, one has to take natural propensities and patterns into account to let the field flourish.

From this distinction between two types of selves, we can make sense of a common phenomenon that generally seems superstitious. Before performing a difficult task, many people fear to speak out what they are about to do or to talk confidently about winning for fear this will jinx the outcome. There is actually a truth to this superstition. Skilled activity comes from the experience of tactful consonance and thus implies a weakening of self-consciousness. When one speaks out that one is going to win, self-consciousness is activated. Instead of dwelling in the internal order and letting it develop, the outsider perspective emerges and seeks control to secure the outcome. And as tact is disturbed, skill weakens and the match can be lost. Seeing bad results, self-consciousness is heightened further and it seeks more control causing a downward spiral. On the level of self-consciousness we could say winning requires not ‘wanting’ to win.

The emanation of this sense of consonance with the world is what inspires awe in us for certain people like mystics, skilled politicians or someone of aristocratic upbringing. It is not so much what they do as it is the manner in which they act. There is a naturalness of movement coming from an unwavering composure. The awe they inspire thus comes from a tactile rootedness. This rooted and free movement in a meaningful order, without doubt or

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<sup>691</sup> T.W. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, p. 99

<sup>692</sup> Heidegger also speaks of “letting” in contrast with the mastery of the earth that is characteristic of modern technology. (M. Heidegger, *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken*, pp. 144-145)

even thought, is why authors in this field are drawn to comparisons with the natural world. Two Buddhist poems on a scarecrow and the cherry blossom go as follows:

Although it does not

mindfully keep guard,

In the small mountain fields

the scarecrow

does not stand in vain

The flower that would surrender its fragrance

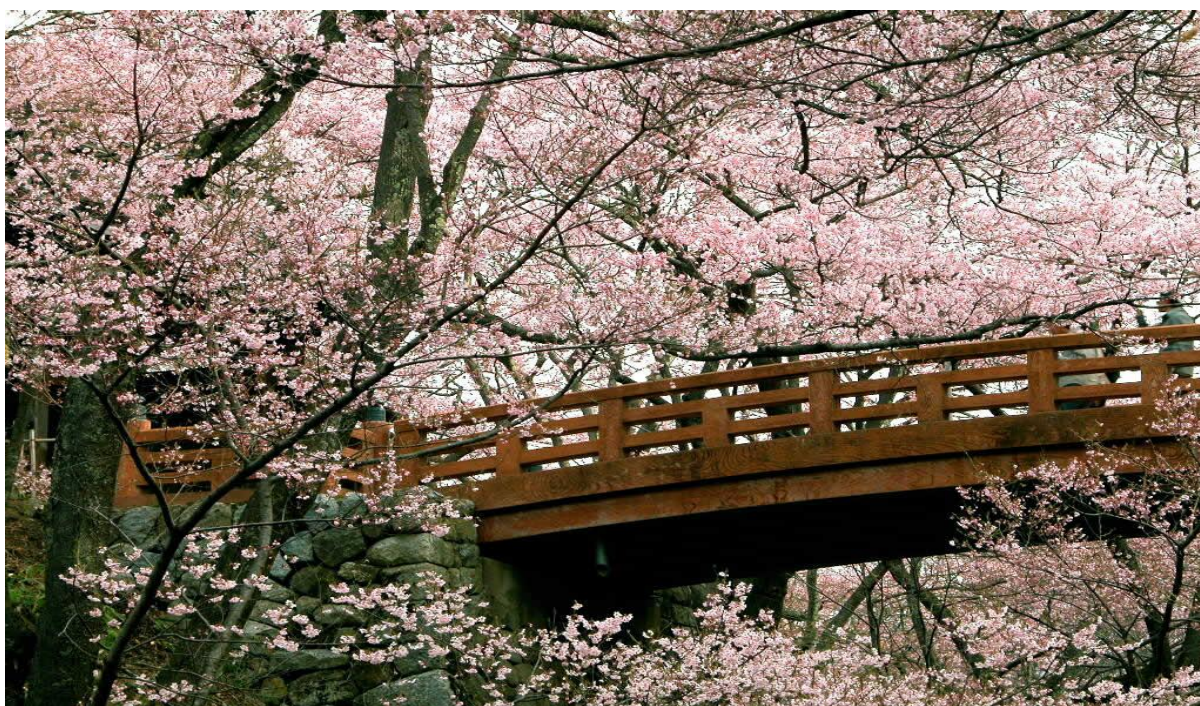
before my brushwood door

Does so regardless.

I, however, sit and stare-

How rueful, this world.<sup>693</sup>

*Consonance and immersion in the present moment is in Japanese culture symbolized in the cherry blossom*<sup>694</sup>



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<sup>693</sup> Poems by Bukokko and Jien respectively, quoted in: T. Sōhō, *The Unfettered Mind*, pp. 35-36 and 52

<sup>694</sup> Source: [http://budgetfab.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/cherry\\_blossom\\_1024x768-671074.jpg](http://budgetfab.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/cherry_blossom_1024x768-671074.jpg)



In the natural world we can see clear manifestations of the tactile dimension, the natural rootedness of behavior and the intense absorption in the moment. Exemplary is the cat preying on a bird: crouching with a gentle thread, a curled tail, ears pierced, eyes wide, an intense stare with nothing in the mind but the prey, moving freely while at the same time unaware of anything around it but the bird, no thought about any motion, but able to perform all perfectly, waiting, and when the prey moves, the cat instantly reacts, leaping up elastically into the air for its prey.

The consonance of tactile rootedness immediately catches our attention and in people inspires an awe that ‘touches’ us from within. In this sense we can understand Roger Scruton’s remark that there is nothing more interesting than interest: “Interesting people are interested people, and an enthusiasm – be it as thankless as birdwatching or as bizarre as philately – marks out the enthusiast as a source of curious learning and a person with a mind that glows.”<sup>695</sup> From this suggestion and linking it with his idea of the pre-modern herd, the conservative Scruton actually manages to bring to light the powerful attraction of a modern mass phenomenon like football:

And the highest form of animal interest is the collective interest of the pack – the interest that inhabits not one animal only, nor each animal separately, but the organism which contains them and which responds as one to the common need of all. This is why teams are so much more gripping than solo performers, and why the quiet absorption of the Wimbledon stalls bears no comparison to the riotous exultation of a Wembley football match. In watching a team you are confronting interest that feeds on interest, response that answers response, perception arousing perception, as the players tremble on the unseen web of nerves that join them.<sup>696</sup>

We will end our discussion here by referring back to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. We followed how he thought the logic of Technopolis to its end, leading to the crisis of meaning. We also saw how Nietzsche sought to break out of this logic and wanted to retrieve a meaningful relation to world and self, but was hindered to do this by staying within the technopolitical framework with his ontology of Will to Power. This tension and the necessity of going beyond his framework is poetically expressed in a section of *Also sprach Zarathustra* on the metamorphoses of the spirit. The initial form is the camel, who is the spirit that carries all that is imposed on him. He takes on the values and truth of the world, which weigh heavy on the spirit. The next form the spirit goes through is that of the lion who seeks freedom. It denies all that is imposed on him and says a radical ‘no’. Both the camel and the lion however, are not capable of creating new values, a task in which we see Nietzsche’s technopolitical stance. However, the final form of the spirit is not some kind of ultimate

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<sup>695</sup> R. Scruton, *On Hunting*, p. 86

<sup>696</sup> *On Hunting*, pp. 86-87. This suggestion of Scruton is all the more interesting as he distinguishes modern music strongly from the animal field and interprets it as the rhythm of the soulless movement of the machine. It would be far more adequate to see how in modern music too the animal absorption in consonance is present. We will return to this in chapter V.



value-imposing subject. It is the image typical of the traditions we have described in this section, that of the playing child:

Unschuld ist das Kind und Vergessen, ein Neubeginnen, ein Spiel, ein aus sich rollendes Rad, eine erste Bewegung, ein heiliges Ja-sagen.<sup>697</sup>

In the camel we see the weak will that bends under the yoke of “you shall”. In the lion we have the strong will that follows himself and exclaims “I want”. The image of the playing child however, points beyond the ontology of the will. It has no self-consciousness, in absorption it is in consonance. It is engaged in play and in its cosmic tact, it wins a meaningful world. The image points beyond the will, or we should say beneath it, to a more primary sphere in which life rests, which we have described as embeddedness.<sup>698</sup>

### **Conclusion: Technopolis versus Embeddedness**

We can now briefly reprise the argument of this chapter. We have sought to shed light on the way that the forces of modernization and those of traditional culture impact the human condition. The general patterns we found in the previous three chapters have here been interpreted existentially. We have called the conjoined impact of the forces of modernization Technopolis, which we contrasted with a human condition of embeddedness or dwelling, which pertains to the world of traditional culture. Throughout this chapter we have argued how these two dynamics differ along several dimension.

The first element of Technopolis that we distinguished was a neutralization of the world. Emanating from the forces of economic and financial markets, cartography, modern science and philosophy, architecture as well as social and political change, the world around us is conceptualized and experienced as being without inherent meaning or direction. The world becomes the totality of neutral objects which are placed as dots against a background of empty time and space.

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<sup>697</sup> F. Nietzsche, ‘Also sprach Zarathustra’, p. 31

<sup>698</sup> Central throughout our analysis of embeddedness has been a philosophical understanding of the body based on the work of several different traditions of thought. What we have not been able to do here and what points towards future investigation is a confrontation with a philosophical line of reasoning that is informed by physiological research. I am referring here to for instance the work of H. Plessner and specifically his concept of ‘excentricity’ in *Die Stufen des Organischen und der Mensch* as well as F.J.J. Buytendijk’s *Prolegomena van een antropologische fysiologie*.

Secondly, through the forces of modernity meaning and direction derive from the human subject that projects them onto the world. Modernity is the actualization of the fantasy of the magician's all-might. By articulating embedded existence, we have discerned diametrically opposed structures. Instead of a neutral world, we found a world that does exhibit an internal meaningful order in embedded practices. It is the novice, or 'uncultured', who is not able to see its structures and instead sees only unconnected objects or actions. Through a process of incorporation, a meaningful teleological structure is revealed that refers *from* something (the proximal) *to* something else (the distal). It is from the practiced usage of particular objects, but also from our bodies in certain settings, that we discover a sense of correctness or natural order. When something is incorporated, we learn how to deal with it at the right place and the right time. Instead of empty homogenous space, we are in a space that is directly experienced as having direction, a space that is spherical. Instead of neutral dots, it is shaped by emotionally charged fields that lead us into a certain direction. In other words, the world has form. The self is not magically isolated from the world, seeking to control it, but it is 'in' it, something we can describe as 'being-in-form'.

The spatial character of life is not an abstract map with equal and neutral dots, but a journey through notable and familiar places in which we have a natural way of movement. Time too, is not a homogenous, undifferentiated factor, but is bound up with meaning or 'rhythm'. We attend to the right timing, as moments can be fulfilled or can come to pass.

Whereas in the supermarket, the ticket office or on TV we are presented with a horizon of neutral objects at our disposal, from which we can choose arbitrarily, embedded life is wound up with a world where our surroundings have an inherent meaning for us. The meaning does not derive from the subject, but instead comes from the world a person is 'in'. This is manifested in evaluating levels of skill, like in judging a soccer match. Of course there can be disagreement about what is the best judgment. But what is at stake in the disagreement is not whether there is a meaningful order against which the activity can be judged. Disagreement is about articulating the right and most embracing judgment concerning what happened in the match. It is not the articulation of psychological facts by subjects. It is the game which itself 'merits' the judgment, not we who project our preferences.

The way of relating that pertains to Technopolis is that of detachment or disembedding. In modernity, people are continuously lifted out of their direct surroundings by factors like global markets but also by the intrusion of expert systems like natural science, psychiatry and business in daily life. Detachment 'objectifies' by rendering everything into transparent objects at our disposal. Embeddedness however, is characterized by moving 'in' or 'through' a meaningful order rather than standing against objects. Instead of detachment, we have spoken here of attunement as the way of relating. It implies a local and tacit involvement with our surroundings. Our surroundings are 'Nobjects' we circle around, through which their gain depth and meaning.

For instance we saw that in modernity, by turning them into collateral, houses are made into abstract entities that we have present before us and which we can manipulate. Embedding in a

house actually means that home is not an object we have lucid before us. A too lucid representation of something, an art work, a person, a historical phenomenon or a tradition can actually destroy its meaning.<sup>699</sup> Whereas detachment makes objects in themselves indifferent, embedded life requires concentrated attunement. Something is experienced as having meaning, not by looking clearly at it, but by dwelling in it.

By making our surroundings into objects of manipulation (“everything that is solid, melts into air”), the dynamic of Technopolis is manifested in the reorganization and transformation of the world according to man’s desires. Through the powerful forces of industry and finance, everything is set in motion and the world is re-created. The self too becomes a reflexive project, denying natural and cultural patterns, and from the outsider punctual perspective, the self becomes a stage.

Being embedded on the other hand, implies that the world as a whole is experienced as a home. Through it runs a natural order with its own way, or Tao, in which everything has a place. Rather than reorganizing everything, this implies a stance of letting this natural order develop or yielding to it. The self too learns to experience a natural place. Not taking the outsider perspective, a sense of consonance comes through tactful being-in. An immersed tactile flow stands against the prepackaged stimulation of Technopolis. Table 5.1 on the next page summarizes these differences.

This way we can understand the way the two dynamics impact the human condition in our contemporary world. But what is their interplay? What happens when we put them together? We know that both are defining features of our world. Yet it is clear that they stand in an antagonistic relationship. On the other hand, we also found out that Technopolis cannot exist on its own and requires an embedded background. In what sense do these two dynamics undermine each other? In what sense does Technopolis destroy embeddedness and in what sense can they be fused? Bringing them together means understanding the process of *Embedding Technopolis*.

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<sup>699</sup> To quote Nietzsche once more: “Ein historisches Phänomen, rein und vollständig erkannt und in ein Erkenntnisphänomen aufgelöst, ist für den, der es erkannt hat, todt...” (F. Nietzsche, ‘Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen: Zweites Stück: Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben’, p. 257)

***Tabel 5.1 Comparing Technopolis with Embeddedness/Dwelling***

	<b>Technopolis</b>	<b>Embeddedness/Dwelling</b>
<i>Constitutive Elements</i>		
World	Neutral objects Empty space Empty time	Meaningful order of Form Spherical Space Rhythmical Time
Self	Source of value As Magician	Find value Being-In
Way of Relating	Detachment/disembedding Objectification/transparency Stand "against"	Attunement Nobjects/tacit Stand "in"/move "through"
<i>Dynamic Effect</i>		
On World	Radical permanent reorganization Everything solid melts into air	world as Tao/Home Letting
On Self	Split to punctual and raw material Outsider/mirrored perspective	Tactile consonance Rootedness/playing child

## **Chapter V: The Task of Embedding Technopolis: Transformation & Deformation**

### ***Introduction***

At this point we have come a far way from the standard anthropology of modern man that we described in chapter I. There we saw an idea of modernity as the breakdown of traditional fetters. Tradition was conceived of as a world of status, inequality, oppression and need, all of which modernity would cast away. In horizontal contracts, material wealth, equality and freedom, modernity represents the unleashing of man from these fetters to human flourishing. This is the self-conception of modernity and it is thus still often voiced in the visions of the global village and a flat world. Our investigation of the dynamic between modernization and traditional culture has led us to a very different position from which we can see that something much more profound and troubling is at stake in our world. The world of modernity brings with it a force of detachment or disembedding, neutralizes world and self, and realizes a vision that we have called Technopolis. Traditional culture is not simply a force of oppression, but answers to the fundamental human need to be embedded. It creates a meaningful world to which man can attune and thus turns reality into a home or dwelling.

The forces of modernization and the persistence of traditional culture translate existentially into the world as Technopolis and the world as a Dwelling. Having discerned these two forces in the human condition separately in the previous chapter, we now need to understand how they relate to each other.

Our existential investigation brought to light their radically opposed nature. We have described them in terms of a neutralized world versus a meaningful world, empty space and time versus spherical space and rhythmical time, and the detached reorganization of everything versus an attunement to an inherent Tao. We have seen their opposite effect in a wide range of phenomena and what we now need to understand is how these contrary motives come together. What happens when these two forces impinge on the life of people? What is the dynamic and direction of this tension between opposing poles? Furthermore, we have also seen in the second and third chapter that they can also fuse when we described multiple modernities. We saw that local traditions persist among Western countries and that new forms of modernity are emerging in Asia. What happens existentially when the technopolitical stance and dwelling are fused? How does such a fusion come about and under what conditions is it possible? Moreover, what happens if they are not bonded together and remain oppositional? This tense relationship seems to characterize much of the Islamic world as well as large parts of Africa.

In sum, what is at stake in the dynamic between the world as Technopolis and the world as Dwelling? To answer this question we need to find a point from which we can interpret the

impact of both on the human condition and understand the ways in which they relate to each other.

To reach this point we need to go back to the idea that Embeddedness is a sphere that precedes Technopolis and which is a basis on top of which Technopolis exists. Although it is clear that it stands in an antagonistic relationship to Embeddedness, we have already seen that Embeddedness is its underpinning. Just as the economic and political system of modernity requires a nutrient culture (the conclusion of chapter II), the subject of modernity arises out of a more primary sphere and way of relating (chapter IV). Put differently, embedding provides the soil from which human life can take root and on which Technopolis is planted. It is a way of life passed on through tradition which provides a meaningful horizon that we come to be attuned to. It comes with practiced patterns of behavior, habits, and a knowledge that is tacit. As such it provides a framework with which we interpret reality, leading us in a meaningful order from one thing to another. We are brought up in conventions that form the human character and body. Through training, a psychologically stable structure is created with which the world is approached. We experience this not as *just a view* on the world (which is the effect of Technopolis), but it is an “ingrained nexus of perception and motivation”.<sup>700</sup> It is not something that we have under our conscious control. Rather, it is that which shapes our relation to everything around us. The meaningful structures we dwell in exhibit the *directedness* of human life: through longing, admiring, being appalled, reaching out, wishing and fearing, we are directed to the world around us.<sup>701</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, that human life is cultural means that it is characterized by ‘being-in’ certain ‘energetic forms’ that give life direction. This directedness give life structure and creates stable expectations in everyday life. Dwelling means knowing certain appropriate ways of acting and thus bracketing out a wide range of other possibilities. The knowledge that is tacit makes it possible to take a wide range of actions and happenings for granted. Dwelling in everyday life is constituted by a tacit framework of reality that we do not have under our control and which brackets out many things as impossible or not worthy of consideration.

Once this framework itself comes under pressure or breaks down, consciousness is flooded with anxiety.<sup>702</sup> It is not a particular opinion or a field of reality, but our sense of reality as such that is at stake. The framework as an ingrained nexus is not at our disposal and changed at will, so when it is challenged this represents a rip in the fabric of the self. With this observation we are coming closer to the point from which we can understand the interaction between the forces of Technopolis and the need for Embeddedness.

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<sup>700</sup> J. Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, p. 63

<sup>701</sup> As Lear notes, Plato already stated that human life was characterized by *eros* in his *Symposium*. Idem, p. 120

<sup>702</sup> See also A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 37

The forces of modernity represent a challenge to the tacit framework of traditional culture. Much of the traditional rhythms of life break down as everything is set in motion. Life is flooded with impossibilities, straining human consciousness. In a very real sense, much of the traditional way of life is undermined. The spatial setting on the land, family and other social patterns, forms of authority are altered and many traditional practices and crafts involve tools and goals that have become irrelevant.

What in culture is passed on through the generations becomes in a strong sense inadequate, while at the same time it constitutes the framework from which we orient ourselves. Our framework no longer seems adequate for the situations we find ourselves in. The basic directedness of life provides it with integrity, but life is now threatened by a profound discontinuity.

But these patterns of culture are the soil on which life stands, in which it takes root and from which it can flourish or bear fruits. If this soil is undermined, then life becomes uprooted and loses its direction. This process is what we will call *deformation*. We can contrast it with a process of *transformation*. The central element in both processes is that of form. We have seen that Embeddedness is characterized by being-in-form. Trans-formation thus implies that this element of being-in-form is somehow transposed to the plain of modernity in ways we need to explore extensively below. Embeddedness persists and in a new way life becomes 'in form'. By contrast, de-formation refers to an undermining of embedding in modernity, leaving life uprooted. Not finding new avenues, form then perishes. We now have a view on a basic challenge from which the two processes of transformation and deformation can result. But we need to penetrate deeper to get a better sight of what is at stake here. What does this challenge mean existentially, and how can we better understand in what way it can lead to either transformed embedding or to deform life? In what way can we better grasp the point from which these different options follow?

We can reach this point from the discussed idea that embedding is the soil on which life stands and provides the tacit framework with which we deal with reality. From here we can discern an existential dynamic as a result of the impingement of Technopolis. We can phenomenologically describe how this dynamic can lead to different reactions, or put differently, we can describe a typology of psychological repertoires.

From the standpoint of embedded life, Technopolis impinges on us as an overwhelming alien force that renders our embedding problematic. It touches our life fundamentally because it alters the structures we have come to take for granted, be it in the form of superior weapons, the introduction of consumer goods through capitalist markets or the demographic change that results from it. The traditional patterns we have been brought up in through the generations are put under pressure and a state of anxiety emerges. Literally our soil, in the sense of that which we inherit from the parental order, has become problematic. The field in which we have been nurtured ceases to be straightforwardly obvious and we lack the framework or concepts with which to deal with this overwhelming alien force. And it is from this basic experience that we can discern a repertoire of reactions. This experience forces us to act and

we will describe four possible reactions. If the described experience goes to the heart of what we face in our world, then these psychological mechanisms will shed light on the ways that societies and individuals have acted on it. As such, it will provide us with a point from which we can existentially describe the motives that drive societies and movements in the modern age. This method of investigation is what Peter Sloterdijk has called 'psycho-politics'.<sup>703</sup> Large political and social developments can be interpreted through a psychological situation and the responses to it. We will develop a psycho-political approach here as a heuristic device to interpret a wide range of phenomena. It will help us discern patterns in the great historical complexity of dealing with modernity. As a heuristic device, we cannot do justice to this complexity, but hopefully we can shed light on fundamental patterns that drive complex historical phenomena.

The first possible response to the discerned state of anxiety is that of *denial*. The overwhelming external force is so threatening that one clings to the old forms. Instead of engaging with the external force, one withdraws from the challenge that reality poses into the forms of the traditional self. It is a very common response for people to become so anxious of a threat that they can only deal with it by pretending it is not there. It is the symbolical reaction of the ostridge, who deals with a challenge by closing its eyes and sticking its head in the sand. Either because one does not have the capacity or because one willfully rejects it, the challenge is not taken up in the response of denial.

A different course of action that does take up the existential challenge is that of *identification*. In this response, it is recognized consciously that the external challenge is overwhelming and threatening to the traditional way of life. This recognition then leads the old ways to be experienced as retarding forces and one seeks to become part of the overwhelming force. Enamored by the power of the external threat, one identifies with it and seeks to burn one's tracks and make a new start. The dream of having such power, the fantasy of restored confidence, casts a dark shadow on the old patterns of embedding. In identification with the foreign aggressor, people willfully turn against their own past as sources of weakness, intoxicated by the belief of restoring confidence and becoming powerful. In everyday experience, it is the way of coping with a threat by turning to the other side.

A third course of action turns to the traditional way of life, but not in denial of the external threat, but as a means for *conquest* over this threat. Rather than identifying with the force of the threat, this reaction actively resists it and seeks to overcome it. It wants to show the strength of its tradition and counter the external force with it. The current weakness in the face of the threat is the result of a decline in devotion to the own way of life and from this motive one seeks to retrieve a glorious past. The basic drive behind conquest is this experience of current weakness and the ambition to compete with the overwhelming force. The embedded

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<sup>703</sup> He suggested this course of investigation to me in a conversation with Peter Weibel, René Gude and Babs van der Berg in the summer of 2010. For an example of this approach see P. Sloterdijk, *Falls Europa erwacht: Gedanken zum Programm einer Weltmacht am Ende des Zeitalters ihrer politischen Absence*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Verlag 2002 (1994)



way of life is thus mobilized and reorganized to meet this objective. This dynamic combines a love for one's tradition with an ardent hatred of its current weakness and is thus driven by a form of self-hate. A common form in which we see this type of reaction is in the attempt to win from others by competing with them in their own game.

All these three possible responses are examples of what we called deformation. They fail to provide an embedding of modernity in a livable structure. In the case of denial, this is because life becomes a meaningless pose.<sup>704</sup> Sticking one's head in the sand, one pretends the threat is not there, because one does not see it, but it is still there and determines one's life. Compulsively holding on to what is vanishing, the person in denial feels this in the form of the threat eating away at the edges of his life. This response provides no way forward and the anxiety thus remains. The person in this mode has to clamp harder to his routines and they become rigid. Not performing them in the right way opens up the flood of anxiety. The patterns of embedding no longer correspond to a meaningful life because that which they refer to has been lost as the context of life is altered. The patterns no longer energize life as they are marginalized. They are performed simply because they are forms, forms without content. Like a stuffed animal, they become a frozen pose and life becomes a museum.

The response of identification is a deformation because it attempts to live in that which is not a house. It is driven by a fascination, a dream of power, but this does not correspond to an inner tacit framework. It gives a sense of power, but at the same time uproots life. Identifying with an external aggressor means that life is not able to take root and is constantly shaken up by having to make new threats one's own. The collaborator aims to save himself by identifying with the foreign threat, but in the end winds up losing himself. Identifying with force makes life constantly subject to change and undermines the directionality that comes from a stable horizon. Without roots, life has no nutrition and shrivels.

The stance of conquest represents a deformation because it ends up destroying its own embedding while it glorifies it. The basic experience from which we are relating the different responses is the existence of an overwhelming external force. It is not the battle with a way of life that can be handled from one's traditional resources like a battle between rival tribes or nations. These resources are rendered problematic as the force is overwhelming. Thus as people aspire to battle it, they become it, their hatred for it notwithstanding. As we will uncover, the root of this response actually is a form of self-hate. In glorifying one's way of life, one hates the way in which it succumbs to the external force. It is thus primarily a battle against the self that is weak. One has internalized the external view of the oppressor that the self is weak. The old way of life is thus erected for the purpose of the fight. The means and standards of the external threat are thus applied and this response ends up destroying its old

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<sup>704</sup> A.M. Verbrugge, 'De vorming van cultuur en de dynamiek van de tijd: Globalisering, onderwijs en de lokale opgaven van hoge cultuur' in: P. van Bortel (red.) *Wat heet beschaving?: Scrutons onderwijs- en cultuurkritiek*, Kampen: Uitgeverij Klement, 2011

way of life, but, unlike in the response of identification, this happens unconsciously or unwillingly.

This psychological typology is political because it describes the motives and experiences of global movements and their fault-lines. It describes what is at stake in these tectonic movements. In the course of this chapter we will interpret movements and societies along our typology.

The response of denial and its deformation are characteristic of many tribally organized traditional groups like American Indians, African communities, aboriginals as well as much of Middle Eastern society. In a consciously stylized form, the movement of conservatism often takes this stance of denial, becoming like these societies 'mere pose' or living museums. Identification is characteristic of movements like futurism, but also of modernizing elites in developing countries, communism, as well as a large part of the West's postwar ideology. We will see how this leads to its own type of deformation. A contemporary example of the response of conquest and its deformation is radical Islam. It has predecessors in many nationalist movements as well as in fascism and Nazism. These movements in effect destroy the tradition they seek to restore in honor.

The tacit framework or soil of embedding derives from tradition and hence also from man's literal soil, the parental order. Psychoanalytically, we can speak with Lacan that the symbolic order is also the order of the father. That Technopolis renders the symbolic order problematic thus also means that the relationship to the father, or more broadly to the parents, is rendered problematic. The form and direction that parents instill in their children is made inadequate by the forces of modernization. The three responses thus also represent three different ways of relating to this parental order. Denial of the challenge of modernization is a clinging to those who in reality can no longer give direction. People hold on to a father that no longer understands the world their children live in. The reaction of identification represents a casting away of the parental order, or a patricide. Recognizing their inadequacy and starting anew is the attempt to live without one's parents. Finally, the response of conquest is the reinvention of one's parents in the imagination. Claiming to follow them, they are actually cast aside for their weakness in favor of a phantom version of them.

In relation to tradition we have described these three responses as deformation and in relation to the parental order we can describe these three responses as 'bastardized'. Becoming a bastard has to be understood here in the literal sense of those who are without parents or whose birth lacks legitimacy. The challenge posed by Technopolis that leads to these three responses bastardizes people as they are disinherited: they lack both a cultural heritage as well as the heritage from their parents. The first response of denial clings to his inheritance, but it is no longer possible for this inheritance to give form to his life. Both paths of identification and conquest actively destroy their inheritance.

There is however also a fourth type of response. Whereas the first three were examples of deformation, the fourth is different and will be described as *transformation*. This response too starts with the basic experience of an overwhelming external force that threatens a traditional

way of life. The other three responses however are anxiously driven to somehow do away with this reality, whereas in the case of transformation the external force is recognized as such and accepted. This does not stem from a defeatist attitude, but from a confidence that even overwhelming force can be dealt with. In ways we need to explore, the structures of embedding have a certain strength and the inner resources to survive outer devastation. In the cases of transformation the elements of ethos, character, structural resemblances and style can be found in the structures of embedding. They are present in the tacit knowledge, attunement and tact of a way of life and they are not strictly tied to the performance of certain activities. When these activities thus cease to make sense as a result of Technopolis, these elements can persist. They have a certain general feature to them, which makes it possible to project them onto new activities. The ingrained nexus can survive the demise of its traditional context and can be projected on to the plain of modernity. It can come to inhabit the activities and social context of modernity. The strength of such a form of embedding causes that its relationship to Technopolis is not technopolitical. The reactions of identification and conquest take up technopolitical means, turning the traditional way of life into an object of manipulation. The strength of the response of transformation makes that its relation to Technopolis remains embedded: it has a relationship of 'letting'. In the face of overwhelming force active resistance will lead to one's destruction. A confident stance however implies taking up the challenge creatively. We have described the embedded stance as following the Tao, which resembles the qualities of water. Precisely because it is not hard (confrontational or tied to a certain activity), it can go anywhere. Because it is yielding, it can flourish in almost any context. The unconscious community of tact remains as the soil from which individuals can draw their nutrition and flourish in new creative ways. In contrast with the other three responses there is no continuous centrifugal tension between Technopolis and Embeddedness as the former is incorporated in the latter. Or put differently, we need to speak here of a symbiosis in which both sides are altered.

As this last type of response is not deformed, it also does not involve the modern logic of bastardization. The parental order is not destroyed, but people have the capacity to let it exist in its own sphere. At the same time, the strength of their inheritance is that it has a general and inner character through which it can be creatively applied to a new context. As the psychoanalytical literature has abundantly shown, all family life is wound up with tensions, but in the response of transformation we can discern the pattern of a healthy dealing with the issue we are dealing with here.

Returning to our metaphor of soil, we can discern four different ways of relating to it. The first of denial clamps to it. However, we have described it as the ostridge-like reaction and it buries its head in the soil. It is not the ground on which one stands, the stability from which life can flourish, but it is the dead matter that makes action impossible and freezes life in a pose. The second reaction of identification seeks to do away with any soil altogether. Life thus lacks a stable ground from which it is nourished and becomes uprooted. Individual life perishes in perpetual motion and the form and durability of society is undermined. The third response of conquest turns to the own soil, but in order to make it into something that it is not. It is the impatient and careless use of the soil spoils it and life too becomes barren. Only in the

last response of transformation, one is attentive to the soil and receives its nourishment. New seeds can be planted in the soil as the ingrained nexus persists confidently.

Only in the last response there is a form of mediation between Technopolis and Embeddedness as the “middle ground” between them is kept open.<sup>705</sup> The middle ground concerns first of all the outer space between people of a traditional way of life and those of a more modern way of life. In this space, people negotiate, appropriate, understand and misunderstand each other, through which a certain mediation is created. Of greater importance is the inner middle ground which concerns letting the forces of Technopolis into one’s way of life and negotiating between both sides. The deformed responses negate both forms of middle ground. In denial and identification the other side is negated altogether. Conquest has a semblance of a middle ground, but as we shall see, its destructive urges make mediation impossible.

The basic experience we are dealing with here concerns on the one hand a new force that is powerful and vital, but lacks form and on the other hand an old way of life that provides us with form and orientation, but which is dying. Once a middle ground is opened there is an implicit and explicit negotiation between both sides and a searching for new form. From this process a spark can emerge, linking tradition with modernity. It unleashes an energy and casts a modern society in form. An old form is transformed and thrusts into the future, embedding Technopolis.

The basic experience we have described is what is at stake in societies and movements worldwide and the four responses to it shed light on how they deal with it. In the course of this chapter we will interpret different movements and societies in terms of these four responses. Through this, we can understand how the world of Technopolis and the world of Embeddedness come together.

## **A). The Response of Denial**

### *Nothing Happens*

Now that we have developed a framework from which we can interpret the way that Technopolis and Embeddedness come together in the human condition, it is time to apply this framework and see to what extent it sheds light on global phenomena.

The first response to the experience of modernity rendering one’s traditional way of life inadequate that we discussed is that of denial. It is this response through which we can

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<sup>705</sup> Jonathan Lear uses this concept in reference to what we hear call the outer middle ground. We will return to this concept in more detail below. J. Lear, *Radical Hope*, p. 29

interpret the psycho-politics of a range of societies. In the following we will focus particularly on this dynamic in the society of American Indians, because of Jonathan Lear's particularly incisive analysis of the dynamic we can describing. Overall we will see that this path of denial is often the one taken by tribal societies and we will need to explore why. Next to American Indians, it can be discerned in many African communities as well as aboriginals, parts of the Arab world and Polynesian societies. However, this response also ties in with some vexing issues in migration and integration. It is a stance that is also taken by many first-generation immigrants from traditional societies when they move to more modern societies. People from certain societies seem to be more prone to this response than those of other societies and this relates to problems of integration that many Western societies face.

We will look at how this stance of denial if insisted on leads to an uprooting or deformation of life. It however seems that it is overall the first response of any culture when confronted with Technopolis. Also those societies that have eventually followed different paths and even managed a transformation of their culture, initially seemed prone to denial. The other responses came from a long period of searching for a new form, but it took a great shock to initiate this opening of the middle ground. Throughout the early modern period until the second half of the nineteenth century, China and Japan also took a stance of denial. Both societies had strong traditional embeddings, but throughout the early modern period saw new forces eating away at their edges. As a result, both closed themselves off from foreign influence. Early explorers of the Orient created an external middle ground in Japan in which Western traders, scientists and missionaries had contact with the Japanese. Seeing their pernicious effect, the Tokugawa shogunate closed off the country and restricted foreign trade to the port of Deshima in which only the Dutch were allowed. For a long time Japanese traditional culture was strong enough to hold off foreign influence and thus maintain a form of denial. It was with the attack of the American fleet under Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853 that the overwhelming force of modernity became blatantly apparent for the Japanese. Although parts of society wanted to persist in denial, an inner middle ground emerged from which eventually different responses and paths were followed by the country. In China it were the Opium Wars that clearly demonstrated the superior and overwhelming force of modernity as a small English army crushed Chinese resistance. Thus even those societies that have at some point taken up the challenge of Technopolis (which we will discuss in the subsequent sections), we can see an initial response of denial.

What we will discuss here is first how in certain cases the basic experience of Technopolis rendering tradition problematic emerges and what a stance of denial consists of. Then we will look at what the effects of denial are and how denial leads to deformation.

The technopolitical earthquake that shakes up a traditional way of life and renders its soil problematic can come in different ways. It can be through violent imposition with superior weapon technology as in the cases of Japan and China. It can also emanate from more soft means as capitalist markets expand and impose themselves on a traditional way of life. In the

case of immigrants, people themselves move to a different social context in which their embedding or ingrained nexus no longer makes sense. It is insightful to look at how the first form applied to American Indians, which we can discuss by way of Jonathan Lear's analysis of the Crow tribe.

A traditional practice among the Crow and other Native Indians was that of "counting and planting coups". This involved different activities that were related to the usage of the coup-stick in the warfare with other tribes, like marking a boundary with it to show after which a Crow would not leave this boundary alive. A member of the Crow that planted the coup showed with it that he was more willing to die than surrender the boundary to a rival tribe. This and other related activities were eminent examples of what the Crow understood as courage. If the tribe was successful in war, it would be able to plant and count coups and if they lost they would not. It was this ultimate dichotomy that governed their warfare. This was however, fundamentally altered when they were forcefully moved to the reservation. The tribes in the reservation were inhibited of going to war with each other. It would thus seem that the tribe had simply lost in war (unable to plant and count coup), but something of greater impact actually happened. Rather than being defeated in courageous battle, what happened was that the very *possibility* of battle was denied. Courage and virtue were defined in relation to a dichotomy that no longer applied. The distinction itself, of winning or losing a battle, broke down and ceased to make sense.

We see here the neutralization of a world, which is one of the constitutive elements of Technopolis. Traditional Crow reality knew a meaningful order. As an embedding, it was characterized by a relation of man to his world as being-in-form. In planting and counting coups the Crow were in form. As we have seen, an action is not merely a physical activity performed by a person. It gains significance through its location in a meaningful order or conceptual scheme. Embedded actions are structured by the dynamic of *from* something (the proximal like the coup-stick itself) *to* something else (the distal, for instance the showing of courage). What happens when the possibility of being-in-form is undermined is that this conceptual scheme no longer refers to anything. As intertribal warfare was outlawed, "nothing can count as counting coups", a central concept through which the Crow could "construct a narrative"<sup>706</sup>. It is important to note that this is different from failing in an activity. This would be the reality if they would lose in tribal warfare. What happens here is that these courageous acts cease to be intelligible as there is nothing they can now refer to. An example of a related activity that Lear gives concerns keeping one's horses in shape. In the traditional horizon this was important for being successful in waging war. When this becomes an impossibility, one can continue to keep one's horses in shape and value the activity, but it is no longer possible to give the reason for why this is important. Because of complaints of farmers, the U.S. government decided to destroy the wild horses of the western plains. This act hurt and enraged the Native Indians in the region tremendously. However, in their rage they were forced to recognize that their way of life was already over. They could no longer give the

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<sup>706</sup> Idem, p. 32

reason of what these horses were *for*, because they were already no longer a constituent part of their way of life. Similarly, the taking of a horse of a rival tribe previously constituted an act of courage. But now it became a source of sadness, but it would make people realize that there is now no longer had anything to celebrate about.<sup>707</sup>

Now if these acts pertaining to warfare belonged to just one of the fields of activity of a tribe like the Crow, the impact would be significant, but not devastating. However, this field was a focal point of the activity of the tribe. It had an energetic effect in Crow life and mobilized the efforts of the people of the tribe in a wide range of fields. The relationship of women to their husbands related to the courage they had exhibited in warfare. Furthermore, religious life was organized around it. The Sun Dance, the Tobacco ritual as well as the dreams and visions of people all related to battle and its courageous manifestation in coup rituals. Even the preparation of meals and the upbringing of children was done in reference to and shaped by these activities.<sup>708</sup>

This very dynamic is similar to what has happened to comparable traditional societies in Africa for instance. Tribal societies there too were marked by intertribal warfare and this thus became a focal point of their culture. Sacred talismans, weapons that many were not even allowed to touch, rituals of dance and ecstatic experiences, all were in a meaningful horizon directed towards battle. Confronted with the weapons of modern technology, this initially led to defeat, but eventually they were incorporated into the modern nation-state, a constitutive element of modernization. To the extent that this happened, the traditional horizon was neutralized and all these activities ceased to make sense.

Alisdair MacIntyre suggests that something similar must have happened to certain Polynesian societies. Foreign visitors were surprised of the laxity in some fields of these societies, but a rigid adherence to certain prohibitions like women and men eating together. When they asked about this, they were told it was *taboo*, from which we now derive the term. These people were however unable to give the reason of why these things were taboo. MacIntyre suggests that there was an earlier stage in which these acts were justified in reference to a social context, which had however already disappeared. Without this context, the taboos ceased to be intelligible.<sup>709</sup>

What we see in all these societies is that a traditional way of life ceases to make sense. It is the impact of Technopolis to neutralize these worlds, rendering a meaningful horizon problematic. This is the basic experience that manifests itself globally in all kinds of traditional embedding. What is typical of the societies described here is that they seem to have had few other ways of response than that of denial. The pattern that we then see emerge is that

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<sup>707</sup> Idem, pp. 58 and 32

<sup>708</sup> Idem, p. 12

<sup>709</sup> A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A study in moral theory (Second (corrected) edition)*, London: Duckworth, 1985 (1981), pp. 11-112

of a certain form of deformation. Clinging on to that what has become meaningless turns life into a living museum.

An interesting insight into this dynamic in Native Indian society is the way Lear described the options with regard to the traditional practice of the Sun Dance. This dance was a prayer for revenge and as such intimately tied to the practice of courageous battle. Lear describes three courses of action once the possibility of battle has disappeared. The first is to keep on dancing even though the point of the dance has been lost and no one can say what it is for. The second is to invent a new aim for the dance, like good negotiations, health or good weather. Finally, they could give up the dance. The second course of action would constitute what is in our terms a transformation. The practice would then persist, but that which it is done for, its context, would change. The old meaningful order would then be projected on to the plane of modernity. This course of action however, did not seem an option for the Crow. Instead they drifted towards the first and the third options. On the reservation they stopped performing the dance, but after time they sought to reinstate it. The steps had been forgotten, so they learned the steps of a rival tribe that ironically, in the past was performed in order to defeat the Crow.<sup>710</sup> What is important for us here is that in such a context, when rituals are still performed, but there is no aim to which they relate, that the rituals lose their inner significance. Outward they can remain the same, but they lose their inner depth. The patterns of a traditional form of embedding become merely outer shells. Traditional social roles, like a chief or a medicine man still remain and people can perform certain activities from these roles. What becomes problematic however, is to achieve the standards of excellence associated with these roles (to be an outstanding chief for instance) and to become a living embodiment of a community's ideals (to be a Crow in eminent sense).<sup>711</sup> But this is necessary to retain a certain vitality and achieve what we have called a transformation. The characters that we have encountered in chapter III are such living embodiments that have been transposed to the plain of modernity. For instance, the French planner of the ancien regime transformed into Napoleon's technical elite and later the country's economic bureaucracy. As focal points that energize people, they make excellences and inner depth possible. They are part of a meaningful order because it is clear what such embodiments are for. If transformation does not happen and people cling to the traditional patterns of their culture, this sense of meaning disappears. Thus in the case of the Polynesian community, the rigidly observed taboos could also easily disappear. Contemporary observers were surprised at the ease with which the ruler Kamehameha II abolished the taboos in the early nineteenth century.<sup>712</sup>

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<sup>710</sup> J. Lear, *Radical Hope*, pp. 36-37

<sup>711</sup> See also idem, pp. 42-43

<sup>712</sup> The exact nature of this development is unclear. Philosopher and psychiatrist Gerrit Glas heard on Hawaii that it was actually the ruler's mother that abolished the taboos in 1819. There is no clarity as to why she would have done this. <sup>712</sup> A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A study in moral theory (Second (corrected) edition)*, London: Duckworth, 1985 (1981), p. 112





If no inner middle ground is opened, in which the energy of traditional forms is channeled into new avenues, then the best and most virtues among a traditional community will be the least equipped to deal with the externally imposed force. They will insist and harden in activities that have been derived of meaning. The concepts in which they dwell have collapsed and no longer make sense of the world they live in. What according to their ingrained nexus is a life worth living, no longer is possible. From this we can understand the remarkable words of the Crow chief Plenty Coups to his American friend with which Lear's study opens:

"I can think back and tell you much more of war and horse-stealing. But when the buffalo went away the hearts of my people fell to the ground, and they could not lift them up again. *After this nothing happened.* There was little singing anywhere. Besides", he added sorrowfully "you know that part of my life as well as I do. You know what happened to us when the buffalo went away".<sup>714</sup>

For the Crow chief, nothing happened anymore, because the framework from which the occurrence of happenings was determined, had collapsed. In this sense, we can speak here of an End of History. Just like in Francis Fukuyama's argument, the object of historical action

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<sup>713</sup> Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/72/kamehameha\\_II.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/72/kamehameha_II.jpg)

<sup>714</sup> J. Lear, *Radical Hope*, p. 2 (my italics)

has disappeared, ceasing its directionality. But for Fukuyama, this is the result of an outward form of organization (i.e. capitalist democracy) that satisfies the longing inherent in historical action. The End of History we are speaking about here comes from a loss of an inner relation to the world that makes actions count as happenings and rather than satisfying a longing, it is suspended by being neutralized. Life ceases to be meaningful and from this different background also a certain boredom takes hold of life.<sup>715</sup>

The Native Indians were placed in reservations and this is also the apt metaphor of what happens to life in denial of Technopolis. The reservation is like the park and the museum in the sense that they consciously have to be created, because without this effort what is in them would cease to exist. In denial, life is transformed into a living museum. People continue to perform rituals, dress in certain ways, distribute traditional social roles and follow a certain aesthetics, but the point of all these things is gone. They do certain things just because they are the way things have been done in the past, but the reason for which they were done in the past no longer makes sense. In this sense we can say that life becomes a *pose*. Life takes on a certain form, but this is a form without content. In other words, the pose is like a stuffed animal, no inner life, but outwardly frozen in time. Roles are still performed, but they lack inner excellences and they are no longer the energetic embodiment of ideals. This is the stance of denial. One tries to cling on to certain forms, but the overwhelming external force manifests itself in the tacit recognition that these forms are not what it is all about. The price of putting one's head in the sand is no longer being able to move freely. It is a reaction to turn inward, but it is driven by an external threat. The basic experience of Technopolis is overwhelming force and in this stance, it continues to eat away at its edges, more and more depriving it of meaning.

It is in the nature of Technopolis to not in the first place vanquish other ways of life, but to turn them into museums. As we saw, Technopolis neutralizes the world, this way depriving a way of life of sense, and makes it into isolated objects that are at the disposal of detached subjects. Moreover, as isolated objects, they are subsumed into the radical and permanent reorganization of everything. In other words, it turns a traditional way of life into a representation at the disposal of another's will. So although in this response, people turn to their traditional form of embedding, this move is derivative of another experience and this way does not succeed. We can see how the dynamic of Technopolis uproots such an embedding, by undermining the structures of embedding that we discerned in the previous chapter.

As mentioned, the structure of proximals and distals collapses. In this structure, objects and activities serve as tacit elements that we have incorporated from which we attend to something else. This way we become attuned to our world. But with the undermining of the

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<sup>715</sup> This is the negative side of Fukuyama's celebration of the End of History that he describes at the end of the book. Losing the object of historical struggle creates boredom, from which people might be tempted to start history over again. F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books, 1992, pp. 328-339

possibility of performing the utmost goals of life, the move from something in our proximity to its aim can no longer be made. Attunement becomes impossible. Like the horses that previously referred to courageous battle, with the latter's eclipse, horses are no longer *needed for or fitting to* a way of life.

By neutralizing a world, turning it into a museum, it becomes the aggregate of isolated objects. This way, the spherical character of the things around us is under pressure. It is by circling around places like home or a place of learning, that they gain an inner depth. These places or things are hard to articulate, precisely because they are not a distinct object at our disposal. In drawing us, pushing us away, setting us on a certain course, energizing us, we keep circling around them, adding layers of inner significance. We can see this from for instance the traditional embedding of art. A painting in a church or a piece of music played there does not stand on itself. It is part of a meaningful structure, in which it refers to the practices performed in the church. They are not at our disposal, but we dwell in them, through which they give shape to our life. Their existence was tacit, but in the museum they are made explicit. The nature of a painting changes when it is lifted out of a church or palace and is placed in a museum. Isolated and detached from its meaningful environment, it becomes the explicit object of the contemplation of the visitor. It is placed against a neutral background, usually a white wall and subsumed in different modes of behavior. It now comes to stand in reference to the curiosity of visitors, often tourists, the museum shop, the orderly movement of people and of course the other objects in the museum. Equally objects of contemplation, paintings and statues become neutral dots in empty space. The white wall enforces their explicit character and so do the explanatory tags. Something is isolated as an object and made the explicit focus of attention. In empty space with the visitor, it is detached. This is what happens to life in a reservation, a living museum. The structures of embedding collapse from technopolitical force. As objects for contemplation or consumption by tourists, things, activities and roles cease to refer to a way of life in which they are embedded. With the click of the camera, life is frozen.

Especially in the course of the nineteenth century, the museum was part of the broad development of the building of the nation-state, together with the spreading of national holidays and instruments like the census.<sup>716</sup> To a great extent, this followed a technopolitical logic, or what Eric Hobsbawm has called 'the invention of tradition'<sup>717</sup>. However, the museum here was also part of larger practices that made it possible to dwell in them and thus represented a form of embedding. This was part of a process of transformation and we will return to this in the section on that response. What is at stake in the cases of museumification we are looking at here, is that they come from an external source. The practices of people here happen *in* the painting, not around it. Deriving from a stance of denial, life as a living museum, is pernicious.

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<sup>716</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (Revised Edition)*, London: Verso, 2006 (1983), pp. 163-185

<sup>717</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003 (1983)

The determinants of life are those forces outside it, the existence of which people seek to deny. As a museum, it is incorporated in the market place and flooded with tourists, overtly with the spawning of highway routes and shops around it, or covertly, in the form of eco-tourism. As an object at other's disposal, Technopolis can also easily make the transition from museum to theme park, in which the shell of a previously meaningful horizon is consumed.

We can see this dynamic at work in places of worship around the world. If they are still a home to people, these people are confronted and encircled by the technopolitical stance of tourists. The place that for the dwellers is a focal point of activity in a meaningful order, is at the same time constantly cut into isolated pieces and frozen by the tourist's gaze and camera. Without coming with lethal weapons, this is a soft and probably more powerful undermining that emanates from Technopolis. Even if the visitors are there with the best intentions and a sense of reverence, the basic issue is that it is not their home and that they disembody the place. Against this, local worshippers often have a dismissive attitude to tourists and preclude them from certain areas and services or deny them entrance at certain times. It requires the greatest inner strength to dwell in the face of this pernicious force and to be so firmly rooted that it is not seen.

For Jean Baudrillard, the experience of museumification, or of life being simulated, is universal. Without a concept of embeddedness and a recognition of the powerful and creative tactile currents in life, he is unable to grasp or process that we describe as transformation. It is however, the fate of many forms of traditional embedding, like those described here. From our analysis we can understand him when Baudrillard says:

In order for ethnology to live, its object must die; by dying, the object takes its revenge for being "discovered" and with its death defies the science that wants to grasp it. (...) The Indian thus returned to the ghetto, in the glass coffin of the virgin forest, again becomes the model of simulation of all the possible Indians *from before ethnology*.<sup>718</sup>

To a certain extent, the situation of Arab societies in the Middle East is comparable to the response and its concomitant phenomena that we have been describing here. Here too we are faced with a social setting that was tribal and nomadic, around which a form of embedding emerged. From intertribal warfare, ruling families and kings emerged. The context in which this emerged has however changed, making the traditional concepts of virtue, valor and excellence less natural. The traditional social organization would thus either have collapsed (like in Arab societies outside the Middle East) under the weight of Technopolis, or have been relegated to small communities or desert reservations, like in the case of the American Indians. That this has not happened is because the situation here is different. An old form of social organization acquired the control of vast energy resources, through which it could be preserved. The mineral resource wealth represents a powerful buffer between Technopolis

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<sup>718</sup> J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010 (1994), pp. 7-8

and those seeking to preserve an old way of life. They thus have more resources to keep their dissolution (by becoming objects at another's disposal) at bay. Moreover, through these resources, a large state apparatus and a redistributionary system can be maintained which keeps the population at ease with an archaic form of rulership. The population is thus frozen in a system that is making less sense. Recently though, we have seen the masses rising and claiming a part in historical development precisely because of this. Technopolitical forces work in manifold ways. Although part of the change has been kept at bay, the population no longer consists of nomadic tribes and increasingly consists of masses of young urban poor. Demographics eats away at the edges of this stance of denial. But apart from the politically excluded masses, authority itself faces the crisis of the basic experience of modernity. Old forms of social organization and behavior can be enforced through the state's means and we can see this in the great extent of mosques that are built by the rulers as well as the funding of mosques and Islamic institutions abroad. However, that what makes these traditionalist policies possible, the foundation on which it stands, is not something which the traditional embedding referred to.

In a sense this is comparable to a phenomenon we see with regard to certain reservations of American Indians. By establishing casinos on their reservations through the form of sovereignty that they have in regard to the U.S. government, great funds can be amassed. These funds can then be used to for instance repurchase land or fund traditional practices. Now although traditional goals can be achieved in both cases, Technopolis stirs at the edges of this way of life, driving home the feeling that these goals have become derivative. The conceptual scheme floats on something that it denies. This comes to light for instance in the irony that foreign mosques funded by Middle Eastern rulers have created some of their most virulent opponents. The soil on which this way of life stands is not an embodiment of traditional ideals and excellences, but an alien ground. Formulated in our concepts of embedding, the goals to which action is directed (the distal, here the traditional way of life) is mediated through something (the proximal, here the natural resource wealth) that stands outside the meaningful order that people live by. With the export of oil, the energy of a culture is literally ignited elsewhere. Life makes sense because of something that stands outside of its meaningful order, thus also casting a shadow of meaninglessness on this life. A way of life draws not on its inner resources, but on outward forces. It is like a painting that is very expensive and insists on a special place for itself, but a painting nonetheless. Rituals can be performed with the greatest reverence, but they lack the energy of being-in-form.

There are several attempts at reform and this requires letting Technopolis in deeper and recognizing its force, but it is a great gamble to see whether this can lead to a transformation that truly embeds Technopolis.

A final example of museumification that we will discuss here is Tibet. In contrast with the other examples, this community is not organized tribally, but it has been able to stay to a certain extent outside of the clutches of Technopolis through its seclusion in the hills of the Himalaya. As a relatively untouched form of embedding, it is however threatened. This comes in the first place from the crackdowns of the Chinese government, but the more pernicious

force is the soft infiltration of Technopolis. Through increased modes of transportation, the building of new railways, its seclusion is being undermined. And with China's increasing wealth, the Chinese consumer is becoming more mobile to travel this route. As a result, floods of tourists have entered the streets of Tibet. Dressing up in traditional Tibetan clothes, they take pictures of themselves to take home. In the process, the objects, rituals and symbols of this traditional way of life are increasingly lifted out of their original context of meaning. Being neutralized and encircled by the objects and institutions of global tourism, Technopolis stirs at the edges of this form of embedding. Not only Chinese tourists, but also Western eco-tourists that hold the Tibetan cause very dear, are part of this process. And as this process unfolds, the question is whether this way of life in its traditional form will collapse and be transformed into a giant theme park.

### *Denial as Deformation*

Now that we have seen how in these cases the originally posed experience is met with a response of denial, which leads to meaninglessness, we can explore somewhat further how this can be characterized as deformed life. In the response of denial, the overwhelming external challenge is denied. Out of fear someone seeks to evade it and like the ostridge, he or she sticks their head in the sand. With this, the challenge might not be seen anymore, but it is still there and the price of one's reaction is immobility. People cling on to their old ways compulsively, but these have become outer shells or poses that mask an inner emptiness. The forms and ideals lack that living energetic force of being-in-form as their context has disappeared. As we described, from a standpoint that clings on to the traditional embedding, 'nothing can happen' anymore at this End of History. For life to flourish, children need to internalize vibrant ideals, but in these cases, their tradition and parents cannot provide them with this. A manifestation of this is the rampant alcoholism and drug-abuse that is characteristic of Native Indian youth. This is found with the Crow, but also with other Indian tribes. Young Navaho for instance no longer ride their sheep over the plains, but instead consume large amounts of alcohol and then race over the desert highways in their cars, a faint and deformed memory of their previous selves. Similar things are done by Inuit youth to escape boredom now that their seal and bear hunting days are over. And a more expensive version of this type of life in which nothing happens is that of the children of the Middle Eastern rulers who fill their days with racing the world's most expensive cars.<sup>719</sup> In the case of the American Indians several external problems play a role, but the central issue is the psychological devastation brought on by the lack of vibrant ideals. Their parents cannot provide them with these. If history has ended and nothing happens, then there is also 'nothing to do'. Hence people are driven to seek thrills and lose themselves with stimulating goods.

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<sup>719</sup> M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Finding Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life*, New York: Basic Books, 1997, p. 71

According to Csikzentmihalyi, and contrary to what many people think, it is actually much harder to experience flow in leisure than in work. We are psychologically bad equipped to stand a large part of life consisting of leisurely activities and go by without following meaningful goals. We then lose motivation as well as concentration. The mind starts to wander and somehow finds itself bumping against irresolvable problems. A life in which there is nothing to do leads to “psychic entropy”<sup>720</sup>. Through drinking, drugs and passive forms of leisure, like watching television or gambling, people seek to forget temporarily that their lives no longer resolves around anything. When there are no goals worthwhile and no work is done that gives direction in life, and daily life assumes the character of a routine, people turn more to leisure. Indeed, this is ancient formula of *panem et circenses* (‘bread and games’).

The lack of directedness in life and the lack of a steady character formation in the light of vibrant ideals, does not only lead people to seek to lose themselves in enjoyment, but also goes together with life being shaped by irrepressible violence. Lee Tamahori’s movie *Once Were Warriors* (based on a novel by Alan Duff) vividly depicts this phenomenon. The movie is about a Maori family living in an urban environment in New Zealand. The parents after they married moved out of the reservation and raised their family in the city. They live a modern life, but there is no meaningful directedness to it. Initially in the movie, there seems to be much laughter and passion between the parents, but suddenly this picture is disturbed as the father beats up his wife in a mist of rage. The father is proud of his fighting skills, and it becomes clear he completely lacks in self-control. His life has no inner directedness and is suspended between emotions of extreme happiness and rage. Seeking some kind of form, the eldest daughter withdraws from this world and aspires a respectable and decent life, while the eldest son joins a Maori gang that fuses traditional tattoos and initiations with the violence of gangster life. Another son is sent away to boarding school where a teacher introduces him to the vibrancy of traditional Maori martial arts, which seem to lift his life up towards something worth living for. The failure of the daughter’s attempt at escape, as she is raped by her uncle and commits suicide, finally leads the mother to take her family away from the violence. She takes her children to live on the reservation, but it remains unclear how these people could go back to such a life. The only vision of life in the movie that seems meaningful, is a shadow of a life that has vanished. As she leaves her husband, she tells him that their people “once were warriors”, but of a different type than the bar-fighting violence her husband engages in.

What the movie depicts is a dynamic that occurs in many tribal settings. It is the violence that also characterizes so many African streets and shantytowns. A traditional way of life is over, but its form of embedding is not capable of adapting itself to new conditions. This leaves people in a limbo between two worlds, neither of which provides an energetic vision of a life that can be coherently pursued. Once warriors are deformed in the meaningless violence of thug life.

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<sup>720</sup> Idem, p. 65

We have also described the problematic relationship to the traditional form of embedding in terms of how people deal with the parental order. In the three responses pertaining to deformation we have described this as a process of bastardization. In the response of denial specifically, this takes the shape of clinging on to a parental order that can no longer give meaningful direction to life. This phenomenon is particularly apparent in the case of many immigrants who have moved to the West. We can see different patterns between people from different types of societies in how people relate to their new social context. Jewish and Chinese migrants often tend to hold on to their traditional cultures, but do this while also adapting in important senses. Around the world, they represent wealthy and flourishing communities, which has also often been a source of friction with the broader population. Especially in Western Europe, migration from Muslim countries has become a very potent political issue over years. These groups from countries like Turkey, Morocco, Pakistan and Algeria generally also cling strongly to their traditional practices, but in a manner that is less successful than that of the Jewish and Chinese diaspora. Especially the first generation strongly holds on to the practices they were raised with in their home country. As, so-called guest-laborers, they as well as Western societies believed they would only stay there to work for a certain period, after which they would return to their home country. Even though many of them stayed, they often remained outside of the society in which they had settled. Instinctively they sought to recreate the context in which they grew up. And because they have come to represent considerable numbers throughout Western Europe, the extent to which they succeeded at this, has become a thorny issue in several countries. In some cases, large parts of whole villages migrate to a specific town or part of the town in Western Europe. But also types of shops, markets and dress have recreated traditional villages in modern inner cities. These communities are often more conservative than the original traditional communities in the home country. This is because these communities work against a background that is alien from them, making the fear of losing oneself strongly felt. As a result, they are often more rigid in their following of traditional practices. To an extent, the relatively large size of these communities as well as language barriers make it possible for these groups to isolate themselves from broader society. However, this act is problematic as it is constitutive of what we call denial. The modern social setting of this way of life presents a basic challenge to it and marginalizes it. Not having embedded modernity, this way of life loses the capacity to energize people as they are no longer in-form. Not being well equipped to flourish in the productive activities of modern societies, a vibrant and meaningful form of life cannot emerge.

This is a situation that the first generation might be able to ignore, but their children cannot. They are born in the modern social setting and their traditional way of life does not come as instinctual to them as it does for their parents. For them, all three other responses lie open. A distinctive type is the figure that burns his bridges and identifies with Western society. Radicalism in migrant populations results from the response of conquest, whereas there are also many examples of those who have transformed their embedding in the modern context. What is at stake for all of them is that the parental order can no longer give direction to the life of their children. They receive morals and ideals from their parents, but these made sense



in a different context and their children are acutely aware of this difference. Many of these parents, especially the mothers, are illiterate and have received little education. At the level of the school then already, the children experience that their parents cannot help them and in many cases the parents are not capable of imparting the value of schooling in them. Literally and symbolically, these children have to translate between two worlds, which constitutes an inner middle ground. It is the skilful and comical manipulation of the passage between the two worlds that is the subject of so many movies on for instance Moroccan families in the Netherlands or Pakistani families in England. This border or middle ground is also a perilous challenge that the new generation has to meet. One way to handle it is by later in life to consciously holds on to their parental way of life. Either to please their parents or to ease their own bad consciousness of not living up to the ideals they are brought up in, this can take the form of the traditionally arranged marriage. A common dynamic is of one child sacrificing him- or herself for their parents' dream as the other children have strayed. Yet the context in which this institution made sense is gone and hence the naturalness of this form has also vaporized. Seeking to live in a form that no longer corresponds to an inner experience of life often results in frustration, and from this violence. The world of their parents is different from their own and they cannot willfully crawl back into it. While youths have grown up with discos and parties, the ideal of femininity that is ingrained in young men is one of innocence and virginity. They desire and thus seek to unite in one vision both the sexy pop idol with the immaculate behavior of secluded rural life. Ideals that derive from a different world and which cannot be lived become mere shadows.

In the case of the Crow Indians we also have an example of how a rift emerges between parents and their children and its social consequences. Lear relates a story of a woman who said that in their traditional ways they would never hit a child. However "lately I did strike a child," she said grimly. "There seemed to be nothing else to do. Times and children have changed so." Striking the child was an act of desperation to regain control over its world. She continues "I am trying to live a life I do not understand".<sup>721</sup> It is the tragedy of many immigrant homes.

Before we finish our discussion of the experience of Technopolis impacting embedding which leads to the response of denial, we need to turn to a related type of phenomenon. In a more consciously and stylized manner, we find the same response with many cultural elitists or conservatives. It is here less a case of simply being incapable of conceiving a different way of life and it has more to do with a conscious rejection of the modern world. But in these type of movements we find the same dynamic as with the American Indians.

Conservatives perceive for instance traditional forms of music, art, manners and decorum to be superior to modern ways. But as these traditions are no longer natural, their character changes. As a political movement, the forms are defended against the general public or the dynamic of the time. What was previously a discipline that cast one into form and made tactful movement possible now is hardened and gets the character of a cult. Its boundaries are

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<sup>721</sup> J. Lear, *Radical Hope*, pp. 60-61

clearly defined and protected against the barbarians. This defensive stance often makes conservatives uptight and incapable of spontaneous movement and comical relief. The stiff upper lip stems from the tacit awareness that they are not in form. Alessandro Barrico has masterfully criticized this stance of defense against the barbarians even though he is strongly attentive to the traditions conservatives point to. According to Barrico, conservatives would contrast the eating of a fast-food hamburger with a traditionally prepared Italian dish with fine wine and then argue for the superiority of the latter over the former. What they fail to see however, is that the right comparison is one between the eating of the hamburger and only looking at the traditional dish.<sup>722</sup> In other words, its quality might be better, but it does not belong to a living form. It is a picture or a painting in a museum that is clung on to, but not something that is ingrained in a community of tact. It becomes just a pose, hard outward, but inwardly not nurtured by a living soil. This is not say that traditions should just be pushed aside (we will look at this below), but it is to say that the central challenge that life poses is not taken on and denied. Being the central challenge means that it is a source of vitality that determines one's life one way or the other. What the conservative stance ignores in its dismissive attitude is the energizing force that inhabits the modern world. Its quality may be considered inferior, but it is driven by the feeding of a real hunger. Not being fed by this energizing force, the elitist or conservative petrifies. Barrico sees the symbolization of this gesture in the creation of the Chinese Wall.<sup>723</sup> Intended to keep the barbarians out, it was more than just a physical barrier. It was also a mental barrier through which the sight of and contact with the barbarians could be erased. It represents a stance of not so much defending against foreign conquest (the wall was not very useful for that), but of stopping the spread of a contagion by barbarism. Not the mark of a vibrant way of life that spreads out magnetically, borderless and in confidence, but it is the mark of a way of life that invents its border in order to ignore the challenge that is posed. And as the border proves ineffectual, the conservative response hardens into a kind quichottery, a heroism of fighting for lost causes instead of acknowledging the nature of the challenge that is posed.

The museumification of this political movement is often manifest in the debates on national canons in art, history or literature. In the composition of these lists and in the debates for and against inclusion, an outside perspective is taken on a form that is already lost. In drawing up lists and explicitly depreciating those who do not know them, this traditional embedding becomes a technopolitical tool. All too sharply delineated, it is like the tagged paintings of the museum. This is not to say that all talk or political invocation of tradition is meaningless, but that in order to be meaningful, it has to come from 'the inside'. Not pointing to objects that others are obliged to see, but radiating the confidence of a mastery of form and emanating that it belongs to a life worth living, is what constitutes such an inside articulation. In its deformed manifestation, this political movement represents the externally projected *ressentiment* (on to barbarians or foreigners) of a way of life that is no longer confident of itself.

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<sup>722</sup> A. Barrico, *De Barbaren*, Amsterdam: Uitgeverij De Bezige Bij, 2011 (2006), p. 163

<sup>723</sup> Idem, pp. 194-198

The earlier mentioned Roger Scruton is an example of a conservative stance of denial. We quoted his insight into the energizing forces in life, particularly related to our movement in and with nature. But rather than turning his eye to the energizing and magnetizing forces of modernity, in the very same book he speaks of it only dismissively. Modern pop music for him for instance, has nothing to do with the animal rhythms he describes and is instead solely the “by-product of the machine”.<sup>724</sup> Not having a vital vision of a present from which a future can be born, he extols “a patriotism of the imagination, which enables you to live, even in the midst of hectic change, among the dead who entrusted their memory to you”.<sup>725</sup> What results is indeed the museumification of life. It becomes a mere pose, like a stuffed animal a fixed form lacking an inner connection to its world. Like the mentioned tribal societies, the conservative stance lives in a reservation, in denial of the challenge that is posed: “We are dying creatures in a dying world. Our place is among the dead, and happiness comes when we acknowledge this, and strive to recreate in imagination, and to some extent in reality, the moral order that has been established over more than a lifetime for the sake of more than a life”.<sup>726</sup>

In sum, the museum and the reservation are the metaphors of life in denial of the challenged posed by Technopolis. People seek to hold on to something of which they are forced to acknowledge that it is no longer what shapes their world. It provides form and direction, but no longer vitality. It cannot sustain a life world and thus no longer provides an ideal of a life worth living, an ideal that energizes people. Old forms are cultivated, but they are organized, suspended and determined by a larger external force. Sticking one’s head in the sand makes the challenge less visible, but its existence remains. Moreover, one has now lost the capacity to move freely. The challenge creeps at the edges of one’s life as the determining force. Compulsively fixating on forms as means to keep this acknowledgment out of consciousness turns life into a pose, a shadow of a former way of life. As a response of deformation, it does not provide a meaningful direction in life.

Why is that we often find this particular type of deformation in traditional societies that have specific features like a tribal organization, hunting traditions and also often are nomadic? The suggestion we want to make here is that in these types of societies the form of embedding (an ethos, the value of certain characters, spherical attraction) are intimate tied to the performance of certain activities. Of course, in all traditional cultures this is the case. A martial or a spiritual ethic has in different cultures been connected with the performance of certain rituals or acts of warfare. What is the case in these tribal societies is that people do not seem to be able to conceive of and uphold this embedding without these activities. Thus when the activities are made impossible or rendered meaningless, their ingrained nexus or embedding ceases to make sense as it no longer refers to anything. In the example above, it means that

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<sup>724</sup> R. Scruton, *On Hunting*, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 1998, p. 67

<sup>725</sup> Idem, p. 24

<sup>726</sup> Idem, p. 26

people continue to perform the Sun Dance, but now no longer can say what the rain dance is for. They have not been able to keep performing the dance, but to project its meaning on a new context, as the old context has disappeared. The traditional culture in these cases seems to be glued to the performance of certain outward activities. Only by disconnected virtues, ideals and morals from such activities, generalizing or changing them in such a way that they can refer to the new context, can this challenge be met. One feature of these type of societies that ties in with this is the lack of the written word. Illiterate societies manifest their culture entirely through practice. Through the written word, a spirit can be detached from a certain context and be reinterpreted in another. This is not to say that tribal societies have no ways of doing this. Jonathan Lear describes how with the Crow Indians another virtue, that of the chickadee served as a transformational force against the clinging to tradition that courage required. Furthermore, in a country like Botswana, the features of traditional tribalism have actually been transformed and woven into the fabric of modern democracy. But this is the subject of the section on the response of transformation. Moreover, other factors also play a role in the type of response than only the type of traditional society. The complexity and size of a society (although this is related to tribalism) as well as the conditions under which the encounter happens also play an important part. Whether there is a war with a technopolitical society or, as in the case of the American Indians, imported diseases decimate a population, strongly effect the possible responses and the spectrum of the inner middle ground.

What we have now seen is what the response of denial amounts to. Life loses meaning by clinging on to forms that have died. The externally posed challenge is denied, through which life is petrified or turned into a living museum. This process however, is acknowledged and faced in the response of identification.

## **B). The Response of Identification**

### *A Manifesto*

Italy has been too long the great second-hand market. We want to get rid of the innumerable museums which cover it with innumerable cemeteries.<sup>727</sup>

These words of Filippo Tomasso Marinetti acknowledge a fact that the stance of denial cannot face up to. The basic experience we have described is that of an overwhelming external force

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<sup>727</sup> F. T. Marinetti, *Futurist Manifesto*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1960 (Originally published as *Manifeste du futurism*, Le Figaro, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 1909) All following quotes in this section will be from this short manifesto.

that undermines one's traditional way of living. Denying this experience and clinging on to the old ways while they no longer work turns life into a museum. As such, life is only about forms which lack content and thus vitality. This is why in *The Futurist Manifesto*, Marinetti could call the museums cemeteries. We are here dealing with a stance that acknowledges the basic experience and seeks to take on the challenge. The stance or response here is that of identification with the external overwhelming force, which in our investigation is that of Technopolis. The response of identification thus seeks to completely affirm and absorb the world of Technopolis and make it one's own. We have of course discussed the world of Technopolis before in Chapter IV. But there we discussed it separately in its pure form, whereas now we will look at it from the standpoint of its dynamic relation with embeddedness. Just as embedding *in the mode of denial* is different from embeddedness described in chapter IV, so Technopolis *in the mode of identification* is different from Technopolis as we described it in that chapter. In this chapter we are discussing phenomena in terms of psycho-politics: our starting point is the basic experience we discerned and the way this leads to different responses.

When we discussed the response of denial, we took the American Indian tribe of the Crow as our point of departure. From Jonathan Lear's incisive study, we discerned the elements of this response with which we could then interpret other cases of this response. When we will here look at the response of identification, we will take the pamphlet of *The Futurist Manifesto* as our point of departure. Its author Filippo Marinetti is mostly famous for his influence on art and some influence in the realm of politics. This small text however, in its sharpness and clearness, will prove to be an incisive entry to the stance we are looking at here. It is a condensed expression of the psycho-politics we want to unravel. The text is strongly inspired by the new technological developments of the age which links it with our analysis of Technopolis. What makes the pamphlet particularly incisive is that its forceful formulations articulate the impact of Technopolis on the human condition. From this manifesto, we will then turn to the other great manifestations of identification with Technopolis.

The most visible political form of identification has been communism. As a response to the inadequacy of the traditional way of living, communism represents the radical embrace of the challenge into one's polar opposite. Tradition is consciously undermined as the technopolitical organization of the world is taken on. Just like the Italy of Marinetti, societies that turned communist, like Russia and China, were backward powers compared to other nations. The challenge of Technopolis thus can also come in the guise of powerful other countries. However, the elements of identification can also be traced within the world's most advanced countries. Throughout Western society, Technopolis has been an internal experience from which people were drawn to identification. We can see the lines of futurism throughout large parts of Western ideology in many different guises.

We have noted that the structures of Technopolis are broad and can take different shapes (in centralized state command as well as the decentralized market and in metaphors like the clock, the machine as well as the network) and thus the response of identification can come in different shapes too. In the postwar period, we can discern it in a form of scientism that

becomes prominent in society. This holds for the postwar reconstruction efforts (and literally its architecture) as well as for Cold War ideology. Furthermore, we will see how the social changes of the sixties can be interpreted as a response of identification with certain technopolical forces as a traditional way of life is discarded. In our present time, we can again find it in another shape through the forces of ICT and finance. This way the global financial crisis can be seen as the outcome of an identification with Technopolis.

After our discussion of *The Futurist Manifesto* as a paramount example of identification, we will turn to the other movements and ideologies and show how they are forms of this response. In them we can see the idea that a traditional way of living has lost vitality and that the strength of Technopolis is a force of attraction. From this an embrace of modernity follows that in different ways leads to a deformation of life. Cutting of life from its roots or neglecting its soil eventually also undermines its vitality and growth.

Marinetti and his group founded Futurism to rid people of the life-denying shackles of the past. The preservers of the past make the world sick: “It is in Italy that we are issuing this manifesto of ruinous and incendiary violence, by which we today are founding Futurism, because we want to deliver Italy from its gangrene of professors, archaeologists, tourist guides and antiquaries.” We have already encountered the impact of the archaeologist or ethnologist gaze as well as the tourism as forces that objectify life and place it into the museum. The author recognizes that life in this form loses its vitality: “To admire an old picture is to pour our sensibility into a funeral urn instead of casting it forward with violent spurts of creation and action.” Furthermore, he goes on to describe in what way the museum undermines life in the manner we discussed it above. We argued of the museum that it involves a detachment of objects from their natural setting in a way of life and placing them on a neutral background as objects of contemplation and enjoyment. No longer part of a way of life, they no longer refer to anything spherical that directs and energizes life. In the passionate words of the manifesto:

Museums, cemeteries! Truly identical in their sinister juxtaposition of bodies that do not know each other. Public dormitories where you sleep side by side for ever with beings you hate or do not know. (...) Do you want to poison yourself? Do you want to rot?

The juxtaposition of bodies that do not know each other refers to what we have spoken of as the detachment of objects and their placement in empty space as neutral dots. Like with cemeteries, flowers could be placed at the feet of the Gioconda (the Mona Lisa) once a year, but not more should be done with it if we do not want our lives to rot. Further on in the text, the author proposes a much more radical dealing with the past:

Let the good incendiaries with charred fingers come! Here they are! Heap up the fire to the shelves of the libraries! Divert the canals to flood the cellars of the museums! Let the glorious canvases swim ashore! Take the picks and hammers! Undermine the foundation of venerable towns!<sup>728</sup>

From this radical rejection and destruction of the past, the manifesto turns to embrace the world of Technopolis. The experience of an overwhelming force that undermines one's way of life here leads to the rejection of that way of life and an identification with the means and spirit of the overwhelming force. In the opening of the text the group turns towards their automobiles. The Futurists are captivated by modernity's power and internalize the vision of the magician's all-might. This is the spirit from which they state that in their cars "Death [is] tamed". They identify with the technopolitical dynamic of disembedding. The powerful forces that reorganize everything permanently imply the dissolution of all that is solid and this is embraced: "Time and Space died yesterday. We are already living in the absolute, since we have already created eternal, omnipresent speed." The identification with Technopolis is also conveyed in the choice of words and their metaphorical use. Modern technologies represent life and vitality. So whereas palaces are "moribund", their automobiles are "hungry". Throughout the text, technological objects are compared to animals as well as humans in action. The metaphors of the animal and active human life manifest both the way in which technology is seen as vital as well as how it is the new 'natural' environment in which we are to live. The automobile that has fallen into the water is like a "shark". Furthermore, they "sing" of:

the gluttonous railway stations devouring smoking serpents; factories suspended from the clouds by the thread of their smoke; bridges with the leap of gymnasts flung across the diabolic cutlery of sunny rivers: adventurous steamers sniffing the horizon; great-breasted locomotives, puffing on the rails like enormous steel horses with long tubes for bridle, and the gliding flight of aeroplanes whose propeller sounds like the flapping of a flag and the applause of enthusiastic crowds.

A metaphor that even more strongly captures the fusion of life with technology is the description of mounting automobiles as "the birth of the centaur". We thus see that the traditional way of living is rejected and Technopolis is identified with.

Now just as the traditional way of life becomes form without content or vitality, Technopolis is pure force or vitality without form. As an appeal to vitality, the manifesto is addressed to "all the *living* men on earth". Force in itself, no matter what it is directed at, is the ideal. Hence the first two articles of the manifesto read: "1. We want to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and rashness. 2. The essential elements of our poetry will be courage, audacity and revolt." This is contrasted with traditional literature that magnified "pensive immobility, ecstasy and slumber". They thus turn against the elements of form, letting and attunement,

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<sup>728</sup> These passages are written with much passion and have a highly lyrical character. For our interest here it is important to sense the atmosphere from which they are written down. In the following we will see that it sheds light on a range of modern phenomena.

that we have discerned in embeddedness. They embrace the technopolitical dissolution of all that is solid into air and “exalt movements of aggression, feverish sleeplessness, the double march, the perilous leap, the slap and the blow with the fist”. The love of force, of perpetual motion implies a praise of war, of agitated crowds and of the surfing of revolutions across modern capitals. Embedding that goes together with a sense of consonance (*Einklang*) is reinterpreted as pensive immobility. Its slumbering beauty is contrasted with the new beauty of speed. And true beauty for the Futurists exists only in violent struggle. The pure force and perpetual motion of Technopolis that is embraced, lacks directedness or form. In Technopolis everything is in flux and affirming it implies a grand journey without direction: “Poetry must be a violent assault on the forces of the unknown, to force them to bow before men” and “we must open the mysterious shutters of the impossible”. It is in this sense that the Futurists speak of running to boundaries of logic and enriching the reservoirs of the absurd.

But the clearest expression of the fact that the identification with Technopolis involves an embrace of pure force without form is another passage:

And yet we had no ideal Mistress stretching her form up to the clouds, nor yet a cruel Queen to whom to offer our corpses twisted into the shape of Byzantine rings! No reason to die unless it is the desire to be rid of the too great weight of our courage!

The lacking mistress or queen refers to the absence of a directedness or cause. It is a desire stemming from courage that drives this forceful movement, but it does not have a clear vision of what it is striving for. There is one further point on the response of identification that we want to derive from our psycho-political inquiry into *The Futurist Manifesto*. We noted that the relation of a response to tradition also has to do with the relationship to the parental order. The response of denial represents a clinging to one’s tradition and thus also the holding on to a father or parental order that can no longer give direction. The response of identification is a rejection of the traditional way of life which is thus mirrored in the rejection of the parental order. In other words, it involves a patricide. We can see this in the text of the manifesto. In the opening of the pamphlet they feel an immense pride at standing “quite alone” underneath the stars. And at its close they meet with the objection that they are only the sum and the prolongation of their ancestors, to which they respond by consciously not listening, “instead, lift up your head!” More explicitly, the text affirms this link between tradition and the parental order:

Indeed daily visits to museums, libraries and academies (those cemeteries of wasted effort, calvaries of crucified dreams, registers of false starts!) is for artists what prolonged supervision by the parents is for intelligent young men, drunk with their own talent and ambition.



The Futurists who confess themselves to not yet be over thirty years old affirm the fate of patricide for themselves at the hands of the next generation. Later, younger and stronger ones will sense their decaying spirits and kill them with strong healthy injustice.

### *Instances of Identification*

From this discussion of *The Futurist Manifesto*, we now have an initial grasp of the psychopolitics of identification with Technopolis. We have gained this through the analysis of a text, and now we can now turn our view to the historical realizations of this response. In these cases, we will see the elements of the response of identification and we will also look at how they lead to a particular type of deformation of life.

The most visible and sharp example of identification with Technopolis is communism. This movement embraced many modern technologies, but what from our perspective is central is that it embraced those structural features of Technopolis that we identified in the previous chapter. As we shall see in a moment, this is most strongly the case when it assumes the character of totalitarianism, which Hannah Arendt has comprehensively described.

The communist revolutions of Russia and China follow the logic of the basic experience we have described. Russia has historically moved back and forth affirming and rejecting modernity. Tsar Peter the Great was for instance strongly impressed with Western European technology and visited the Netherlands to learn more about it and bring it to Russia. And as an earlier example of the same technopolitical stance that created the city of Brasilia, he created the new modern Russian capital St. Petersburg ex nihilo in 1703. Similarly, the later Catherina the Great admired and corresponded with thinkers of the Enlightenment. When this led to more revolts in Russia, she changed course and banned their books. In the early twentieth century, Russia was in dire conditions. Poverty was rampant, decentralizing forces aspired against the tsar and the First World War was demanding a heavy toll. Competing with stronger more modern countries, traditional Russian society was in peril. It was in this context that the Russian Revolution of 1917 happened after which the country turned communist.

Communism represented a radical break with the traditional way of living. It abolished the institution of the tsar, the social organization of feudalism and private property. Traditional forms of embedding like the family were viewed with suspicion. In this atmosphere, the small child Pavel Morozov, who turned in his father to the authorities, was turned into a national hero. It shows the patricidal character of communism. Seeking to overcome Russian backwardness, this break with tradition went together with a radical embrace of modernity. Indeed, communism was held to be more modern than the system of the powerful competitors as it superseded capitalism. The nineteen-twenties saw a vast industrialization of the Russian economy and agriculture was rationally planned.<sup>729</sup> Society and politics were reordered

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<sup>729</sup> That the outcome of rational agriculture was not very successful is something we saw before when we looked at how embedding requires *mētis*.

according to scientific principles. As Lenin stated, communism is “Soviet power plus electrification”.<sup>730</sup>

China was slow to reform under the overwhelming influence of Technopolis emanating from Western countries. As we mentioned, the reply of the emperor was denial, until the institution was overthrown in 1911, after which the republicans sought slow reform. The most devastating experience of overwhelming power that undermines one’s traditional way of life came with the Japanese occupation. Having modernized much earlier, the Japanese put the country in crisis. As the republicans were forced to flee to Taiwan, the communists under Mao took power. Just like in the Soviet Union, this implied a radical break with tradition. Conceived of as the source of backwardness and weakness, traditions were forcefully crushed. Confucian writings and old practices were abolished. The most radical outburst of this was of course the Cultural Revolution. In it, we can see the link between tradition and the parental order we discussed. Breaking with tradition meant that young Chinese revolutionaries, like Futurists, denounced and revolted against their parents. The patricidal tendency also involved teachers, scholars, masters of ancient crafts and other traditional authorities. Like the Futurists, the communists wanted to stand quite alone under the stars.

*Chinese Propaganda Poster*<sup>731</sup>



<sup>730</sup> H. Arendt, *On Revolution*, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1990 (1963), p. 65

<sup>731</sup> Source: <http://www.maopost.com/post/0935-001M.jpg>

Through Hannah Arendt's study *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, we can see how in particular totalitarian communism exhibits the character of an identification with Technopolis and the deformation that results from it.

In her study, Arendt looks at how Nazism as well as the Soviet Union under Stalin. Here we will only look at the latter case. Although through the lens of totalitarianism both regimes are similar, psycho-politically they are different. Whereas the Soviet Union is an example of identification, the Nazi regime can be interpreted as a response of conquest, which we will look at in the next section.

Through centralized and forceful means, the Soviet Union realized the radical and permanent reorganization of everything, which we have discerned in our discussion of Technopolis. According to Arendt, there is a "perpetual-motion mania" in totalitarian movements which in order to remain in power need to "keep moving and set everything around them in motion".<sup>732</sup> As such, there is little continuity and people need to be extremely adaptable. They need to have what we have called a mobile personality. This is also what distinguishes totalitarian regimes as well as other types of communist regimes from fascist regimes. In fascism all kinds of traditional institutions are left intact, like the church, civil organization and the family. These bedrocks of stability and continuity are in an identification with Technopolis undermined. Indeed the concept of permanent revolution that we attributed to Technopolis, originally derives from the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky. Different policies were implemented that undermined the traditional forces of continuity and put these forces in continual flux. A specific policy that was followed to make sure that not even the state apparatus that reorganized society would become a force of its own was the replication of organizations. The all-powerful state itself was not a Weberian bureaucracy with stable hierarchy and principles. As we saw in chapter II, this bureaucracy requires non-modern elements to institutionalize. In a complete identification with modernity, the state is also constantly in flux: "This fluctuating hierarchy, with its constant addition of new layers and shifts in authority, is well known from secret control bodies, the secret police or espionage services, where new controls are always needed to control the controllers." There was a continuous "insertion of a new more radical layer, hence driving the older group automatically in the direction of the front organization and away from the center of the movement".<sup>733</sup> Nothing is allowed to become solid and everything has to melt into air. In this process, the communist state of Russia incorporated and implemented the disembedding that stands at the heart of Technopolis. The magical stance of Technopolis denies any natural meaningful order in which things and people have a natural place. Instead, everything becomes an object at man's disposal and thus set in motion. The revolutionary Nikolai Krylenko expressed this when he said "we must finish once and for all with the neutrality of chess. We must condemn once and for all the formula "chess for the sake of chess", like the formula "art for art's sake". We must organize shockbrigades of chess-players, and begin

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<sup>732</sup> H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1979 (1948), p. 306

<sup>733</sup> Idem, p. 369

immediate realization of a Five-Year Plan for chess”.<sup>734</sup> In its different manifestations, from capitalist financial markets to Hollywood and from Cecil Rhodes to the story of Faust, we see in modernity the spirit of the magician who denies limitations and in his vision of all-might believes that everything is possible. And in the manifestation we are looking at here, we can see how the perpetual-motion mania of the communist regime undermined all stability and also made people believe that everything can be manipulated: “In an ever-changing, incomprehensible world the masses had reached the point where they would, at the same time, believe everything and nothing, think that everything was possible and that nothing was true.”<sup>735</sup> The Orwellian dystopia is a manifestation of the mad scientist’s or magician’s inquiry into what is possible.<sup>736</sup> The view of the Soviet Union as an identification with Technopolis is further corroborated by the way Arendt analyzed its intellectual heritage. She argued that there is a great affinity between the Marxism of the Soviet Union and the Darwinism of the Nazis. In both theories the concept of ‘development’ plays a decisive role: “The tremendous intellectual change which took place in the middle of the last century consisted in the refusal to view or accept anything “as it is” and in the consistent interpretation of everything as being only a stage of some further development.”<sup>737</sup>

In this system, people are directly subsumed in a development or movement. No longer bourgeois with opinions on certain issues, the modern masses are not differentiated from and directly partake in the movement. This response is the attempt to live in Technopolis, which has its own type of deformation. Man is taken out of his traditional house and subsumed in modernity’s flux. People come to identify with a mysterious force (in this case, history or class struggle,) for which there are no limits and everything is possible. The leader then is not like in a traditional despotic regime a private person whose force is personal will on to others. Rather, in the totalitarian movement, leader and masses are one and both are the manifestation of a larger ‘development’.

Seeking to live in Technopolis, the principle of detachment is affirmed and the stability of the everyday structures of embedding disappears. These structures of a traditional way of life that give orientation and direction are undermined in the identification with the external force. Yet without roots to grow from or soil to stand on life withers away. This dynamic parallels the analysis of Hannah Arendt even though she never seriously considered traditional culture. In her terms, totalitarianism undermines the capacity for experience and common sense. This is in our terms the form of embedding or ingrained nexus that comes from tradition. It is the basis on which life stands and from which we can organize our experiences into a narrative and reason about the world. When this basis is lost, the sense of reality is lost. Complete

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<sup>734</sup> Reference from: idem, p. 322

<sup>735</sup> Idem, p. 382

<sup>736</sup> Literally following Arendt’s discussion, in 1984 the Ministry of Truth is concerned with the fabrication of lies.

<sup>737</sup> Idem, p. 464

identification with Technopolis means utter disembedding, a condition in which man cannot prosper. We require a stable environment that we can trust on as a basis with which we can take on the world. As Csikszentmihalyi argues, such an external environment structures the mind. It requires us to invest psychic energy and this way stops the mind from unraveling. The stability of our environment is necessary for “reality maintenance”.<sup>738</sup> These functions are lost in this response to the basic experience. The overwhelming external force is identified with and the traditional way of life rejected. It is however the basis we need to stand on and as the external force is overwhelming; we are not capable of living in it. Without soil, man becomes a free-floating being. Attracted by the force of Technopolis, he moves close to it, but as this force is formless pure energy, it burns him up.<sup>739</sup>

As we have noted several times, Technopolis comes in many shapes and guises. Communism with its radical stance of social engineering has been one of the clearest expressions of the identification with Technopolis. It emerged in countries with traditional societies that experienced the threat of more powerful foreign countries. As a result, these societies responded by completely taking on modernity in a bid to gain supremacy.

However, the same response can also be found within the countries of the West and here we will focus on a few on its instances. Western countries have had a longer experience of dealing with modernity and have given different responses to it. To a great extent, as we found out in our more elaborate investigation in chapter III (to which we will return in the last section), these societies have in the long run been able to respond by transformation and they thus could avoid the deforming responses. Yet still within transformed societies different impulses can exist, just like we saw with modern conservatives that respond with denial. Moreover, as we shall see, a transformation is not a one-time achievement, but will in time have to be renegotiated. Thus in certain phases or segments of society different responses can emerge.

It is clear that communism as an identification with Technopolis led to human disaster and thus deformed life. To the extent that we here have to do with lesser and different instances of the same response, its dynamic will also be comparable but different in relevant ways. We will look at two periods in which we will see in the West the emergence of an identification with Technopolis in different ways. First we will turn to the postwar period of reconstruction and the social revolutions of the sixties. After that we will turn to more recent developments. Over the last few decades, emanating from the spheres of new technologies as well as the financial sector in quite a different way we can discern an identification with Technopolis and its deforming character. What holds these different manifestations together is that they all

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<sup>738</sup> M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Finding Flow*, pp. 42 and 90

<sup>739</sup> Some type of form always exists in a polity and in communist regime there were principles, plans and structures that ordered life. What we have emphasized in our analysis here however is what Arendt has called the ‘perpetual motion-mania’ that stands at the basis of this regime, giving it its formless character.

share the constitutive features of Technopolis: a neutralization of a meaningful order, the subject as a magical source of value, detachment and the radical reorganization of everything. We need to note that these phenomena are highly complex. We can here only give a sketch of them in relation to the response we are discussing in this section.

In the immediate postwar period there was not, like with the countries that turned communist, an external enemy that proved to be more modern than people sought to emulate. There was however a similar sense that the old way of life was no longer possible. This was precisely because many people believed that their previous way of life, bourgeois-citizenship in a nation-state, was the cause of the destructiveness of the Second World War. One source for the radical nature of different postwar developments was this break with the past to make sure that it would never happen again. In a different form we thus encounter the basic experience that the old way of life no longer works. One way to deal with this was to embrace technopolitical rationality as a means to reorganize society. This form of identification was centralized and statist and involved what we could call a certain scientism. Through economic programs like the Marshall Plan, Europe was to be rationally and peacefully reconstructed. Fields like housing and the household itself were subject to this rationality. The social conditions of life too were technocratically planned in the creation of the welfare state. No longer needing to rely on traditional social organization like the family, people were to be taken care of equally by the state. In a much more mild way than in communist states of course, a leftist utopianism emerged in which the state would organize a happy and peaceful society. Foreign policy too that is so critical to avoid war was organized in rational structures with the creation of new international bodies ranging from the United Nations to the unification of Europe that aspired to supersede the *raison d'état*.

In the field of housing, the before mentioned ideas of Le Corbusier became a dominant influence. Although he himself did not realize much of his ideas (save for in Marseilles), his students did and throughout the postwar period town-planners in the West were gripped by his ideas of rationality. It is worth quoting Le Corbusier's remark on discarding with the past in Paris: "Imagine all this junk, which until now has lain spread out over the soil like a dry crust, cleaned off and carted away, and replaced by immense clear crystals of glass, rising to a height of over six hundred feet!"<sup>740</sup>

This type of identification with Technopolis combined (but also clashed) with a different manifestation of it in the social realm in the revolutionary period of the sixties. The social movements also aspired a radical break with the past. It were the authoritarian bourgeois values of the past that repressed man, which led to the violent outburst of war. Whereas the technocratic rationality of the postwar period neutralized a traditional way of life and made a planning state into the subject that is the source of value, the thrust of these social movements

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<sup>740</sup> Quoted from T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview that makes the underclass*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001, p. 148

neutralized the past and made the individual subject the source of all value. The free individual and its choices were seen as the source of value. We see here a further extension of the dynamic of Technopolis that had already appeared in the political sphere after the French Revolution. There too, the past order and regime was seen as repressive and individual choice became the principle of politics in democratic governance. The movements of the sixties extended this dynamic into the social sphere.<sup>741</sup> Within democracy, all kinds of authoritarian values and principles still reign. Releasing the individual from them can only bring true freedom of the subject. This line of reasoning follows what the psychiatrist Theodore Dalrymple has called a “hydraulic” concept of the soul.<sup>742</sup> The individual is seen as a vat that can take up a certain amount of pressure. However, once pressure mounts, steam also has to be released. Excessive pressure from societal demands builds up pressure and frustration that leads to unhappiness or violence. It is a concept of the soul that can also be found in the work of Sigmund Freud<sup>743</sup>, who also was a great inspiration of these movements. Removing societal pressures and expressing free sexuality was conceived as the way to harmony and happiness.<sup>744</sup> As different as the ideals of the authoritarian Le Corbusier and the anti-authoritarian movements of the sixties might be (stemming from different versions of Technopolis<sup>745</sup>), both start from a radical break with the traditional way of living. As such, both exhibit the patricidal tendency that is characteristic of identification. In both the new communes, social experiments and musical expressions of the movements of the sixties as well as the mathematical thought-experiments of game-theoretical foreign policy advocated by Hermann Kahn and John Von Neumann, we see a subject that breaks with the traditional embedding and becomes the magical source of value for a new world. The fire of subjectivity burns in both the iconic pop artist and the calculating genius scientist.

Now that we have seen that these are cases of identification with Technopolis, we now need to see what their dynamic is and how they lead to a deformation of life. In the statist technocracy of Le Corbusier, the break with the past and the recreation of the world is to be done by “grand seigneurs”, men “without remorse”, like Louis XIV, Napoleon and Hausmann. Examples of “creation”, these men could put everything in motion at will. Le Corbusier praised the planner Louis XIV who made things happen simply by saying “we wish it” or “such is our pleasure”.<sup>746</sup> Now although Le Corbusier sought this kind of father-figure,

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<sup>741</sup> See A.M. Verbrugge *Staat van verwarring*, forthcoming

<sup>742</sup> T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom*, p. 198

<sup>743</sup> See for instance S. Freud, ‘Das Unbehagen in die Kultur’, 1930, in: *Gesammelte Werke: vierzehnter Band, Werke aus den Jahren 1925-1931*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag GmbH, 1999

<sup>744</sup> We will see in the section on the response of transformation that a different conception of the soul in much more plausible deriving from our analysis of embeddedness.

<sup>745</sup> Indeed, Le Corbusier stated “Architecture or Revolution. Revolution can be avoided”. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*, Miami: BN Publishing, 2008 (1927), p. 289

<sup>746</sup> P. Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow*, Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2002 (1988), p. 222

it is important to note that his rejection of traditional embedding is actually a patricidal act. Not standing in a tradition, the identification with Technopolis becomes formless. Circumstantially this is corroborated by the fact that Le Corbusier himself never found his Sun King. More to the point, he himself expressed that there was no certain embedding one could turn to: “France needs a Father. It doesn’t matter who”.<sup>747</sup> Indeed, he was even willing to look for him in the Vichy regime. The identification with Technopolis is a feat of pure energy seeking to break free and transform everything, but lacks form. Just as the Futurists had no queen to sacrifice themselves to, Le Corbusier would never have been able to find a “father”.

The same dynamic can be discerned with regard to the social movements of the sixties. The before mentioned Theodore Dalrymple has masterfully analyzed how their ideals have often led to their contrary. If individuals are to be freed from societal fetters and nothing is in itself right or wrong (but only in reference to the individual), then the whole structure of embedding is viewed as arbitrary. If a stable ingrained nexus is undermined and everything becomes ‘just a view’, then these views come to be experienced as nothing but the imposition of another’s will.<sup>748</sup> What results is a Nietzschean contest of wills. As subjectivity undermines all stability, everything that is solid, melts into air. Dalrymple vividly describes how as a result of these dynamics contemporary life gets a fleeting character. This holds for families that shift as a result of clashing wills, microwave meals that are individually consumed as the table around which communal rituals were held disappears as well as the fleeting character of relationships that are based solely on physical attraction. The dynamic we see here is that the denial of embedding means that we lose the stable relationship to things and people around us. In embedding, we circle around them, through which they gain depth and meaning. Identifying with the free subjectivity of Technopolis, puts things and people in perpetual motion and the contact with them becomes superficial.

This phenomenon however, does not just derive from the influence of certain ideas that originated in the movements of the sixties, but is connected to broader changes, something that Dalrymple insufficiently recognizes. Alessandro Barrico has sought to describe what it is that characterizes contemporary modern people in the context of large historical changes. He connects the contemporary changes to the new wave of technology of the last few decades in the field of ICT. In this sense he argues, contemporary life can also be described through concepts that derive from this technology. The establishment of external links for instance is something that not just pertains to the organization of the internet, but also to social life in general. More interesting for our concerns here is his suggestion that our relation to our environment can increasingly be characterized as ‘surfing’.<sup>749</sup> This can be contrasted with the traditional practice of circling, in which we move into the depths of something by

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<sup>747</sup> Idem, p. 225

<sup>748</sup> T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom*, p. 72

<sup>749</sup> A. Barrico, *De Barbaren*, p. 107



continuously coming back to it in a circling motion. The practice on the internet which we call surfing by contrast is as the metaphor suggests a movement over the surface. We navigate over the internet, which means we do not stay with anything long and instead move over the changing waves. From these dynamics, we can now come to see in which life is deformed under these responses of identification.

As we lose the embedding of a stable environment that provides depth and meaning, life is increasingly dominated by a multitude of chaotic impressions. This is what Kenneth J. Gergen has described as “the saturated self”, which to a large extent derives from modern communications technology. Older concepts of a unified self come to disappear under the chaos of impressions or social saturation that relativizes any truth. The experience of the self as fragmented, as it becomes heavily populated, is a condition Gergen calls “multiphrenia”.<sup>750</sup> As the self is under threat in this technopolitical world, we see that the chaos of fleeting impressions gives life a dream-like character. This is how Dalrymple’s patients describe their actions. A form of embedding gives life stability, makes it predictable for us and gives us a confident sense of being able to handle situations. The vocabulary Dalrymple points at expresses life as a dream one passively undergoes: “The knife went in”, “the drinks kept on coming”, “my head just went”.<sup>751</sup> The deformation of identification with Technopolis (here in the form of free-floating and surfing individuality) thus parallels the deformation we saw in totalitarian communism. Without embedding, people are drawn into an overwhelming flux. In both the ‘development’ of History and the surfing of the waves, life is burnt up in a perpetual-motion mania in which everything melts. This burning up in the contemporary identification with Technopolis happens in the desolate lives “at the bottom” or in a more glamorous version of the rock star in sex, drugs and rock ’n’ roll. Like people in totalitarian Technopolis, the result is an uprooting of life. The central problem with the propagation of free individuality as it emerged over the last decades is that it does not acknowledge the ground on which it stands. It is from a form of embedding that stabilizes life and gives shape to it, that a relatively tranquil foundation is created from which individuals can be free. When this basis and its symbiosis with subjectivity is not acknowledged, and instead there is an identification with the technopolitical world, this tranquility vanishes and it leads to the violence and chaos of a war of all against all.<sup>752</sup> It is the one-sided absolute embrace of subjectivity that burns people up.

The centrally or state-planned version of the identification with Technopolis leads to similar deformation. Life is threatened in the technopolitical world of rational housing as in its essence it undermines the sense of home which belongs to embedding. In his identification, Le Corbusier embraced this: “We must arrive at the “house-machine”, which must be both practical and emotionally satisfying and designed for a succession of tenants. The idea of the

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<sup>750</sup> K. J. Gergen, *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life*, New York: Basic Books, 2000 (1991), pp. 17 and 69

<sup>751</sup> T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom*, pp. 6 and 9

<sup>752</sup> Idem, p. 234

“old home” disappearing and with it local architecture, etc, for labour will shift about as needed, and must be ready to move, *bag and baggage*.”<sup>753</sup> Only by identifying with the world of Technopolis and its values can “emotionally satisfying” be conceived of in the setting of the disappearance of the “old home”. The transparency of the straight line is opposed to the homely motion of circling. In isolated walkways, rigidly defined areas and Orwellian notices<sup>754</sup>, a stable basis of trusted and familiar embedding is denied.

Another powerful illustration of the deformation of identification with Technopolis is Stanley Kubrick’s film *Dr. Strangelove*. It parodies the Cold War rationality we have described. The movie is about the threat of the so-called Doomsday Machine, an idea that Hermann Kahn developed. In order to assure safety, the Soviet Union has devised a machine that automatically destroys the world if the country is under any attack. As this happens automatically, the enemy knows for certain that the nerve of the Soviet Union cannot be tested with even small attacks. The macabre logic explained by Dr. Strangelove mirrors the Cold War doctrine of Mutually-Assured Destruction, or quite aptly MAD. Having identified with the technopolitical rationality, Dr. Strangelove is the mad scientist, or what we earlier described as the magician who makes the Faustian bargain that eventually leads to destruction. His detached logic flies in the face of Arendtian common sense which derives from embedding. Through the frailty of human conduct, the machine is set off. After total destruction is assured, the doctor’s disembedded logic persists as he convinces the U.S. high command to go underground after which, according to his calculations, the entire country could be rationally rebuilt in the course of a few generations. Identifying with Technopolis, man burns up in its rationality and the world is no longer a home.

We will end our discussion of this form of response by looking at one more recent instance of it. The centralized planning that characterized the postwar has since the nineteen-eighties been abandoned, but it has been replaced by a different form of identification with Technopolis. From the state, a one-sided reliance on technocratic rationality (without acknowledging the soil of embedding) has emerged in relation to the market. Technopolis is a constitutive part of modern life and as such it cannot be ignored in our view of the world. The liberalization of the last three decades however, to a large extent assumed the character of an absolute doctrine. Within our contemporary world, we can see a consequential identification with Technopolis. The successes of the market made it a metaphor for good organization in all fields. Outside of the market place, people argued that “the state should be run as a business” and even family relations were interpreted in terms of calculation by market participants.<sup>755</sup>

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<sup>753</sup> P. Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow*, p. 224 (original italics)

<sup>754</sup> Dalrymple makes the comparison with Orwell. From our different perspective, we have seen why this comparison makes sense.

<sup>755</sup> J. M. Buchanan, R. D. Tollison, G. Tullock (eds.), *Toward a Theory of Rent-Seeking Society*, College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980, p. 9

In a different form, people in this case also came to believe that a new blissful period had arrived for which the past could no longer serve as a guide. Combined with the achievements of new technology, the idea of a New Economy spread. The created transparency, globalization and rationality of markets had made consistent higher economic growth and well-being possible. The old rules no longer applied. That the market became paramount can be seen from the widespread belief that its traditional embedding, the regulative framework, was deemed unnecessary. The system was virulently and complexly defended by then Chairman of the Federal Reserve, the genius-economist Alan Greenspan. He argued that the enlightened self-interest in financial markets would lead to the efficient allocation of capital. In the ideology of neo-liberalism, greed and other classical vices were conceived as virtues that made the market function well. It was a full-fledged embrace of the doctrine of the invisible hand.

We have seen in the previous chapter that the financial markets, with their detached rationality, objectifying and reorganizing the world, can be seen as the pinnacle of Technopolis. The belief had come to be that this system of “frictionless capitalism” was self-sustaining. As the global financial crisis spread however, these markets fell down like a house of cards. What became clear was that this sphere had become completely detached from the underlying economic reality. For instance, the Babylonian system of derivatives on top of the questionable subprime market referred only to other financial markets. And as new participants entered the markets and the “irrational exuberance” was sustained, a tremendous financial complex was built on weak foundations. In the stance of identification, this technopolitical world of detached markets was believed to be a system in which mankind could live and flourish at the neglect of the structures of embedding. What the financial crisis showed was that Technopolis cannot stand on its own and that it needs this foundation. The belief that there is no such thing as society ended up in the chaotic shockwaves that spread throughout the global economy. In a different form, we see the same pattern as in the other cases of identification with Technopolis. Identification with it means that all that is solid in life melts into air. The sense of power and expansion that initially goes with being part of ‘the development of history’ or the absolute freedom of choice ends up in uprooting life and thus deforming it. Technopolis is an overwhelming external force that we have to deal with, but something we cannot be at home in. It has to be balanced by embedding. Still in his heydays, the complex reasoning of Alan Greenspan was already dubbed ‘Fedspeak’ or ‘Greenspeak’, with which an allusion was made to the ‘Newspeak’ of Orwell’s *1984*, that other identification with Technopolis. And after the crisis had erupted and he testified to his past actions, he resembled Dr. Strangelove who explains his detached reasoning in the midst of disaster:

“All of the sophisticated mathematics and computer wizardry essentially rested on one central premise: that enlightened self interest of owners and managers of financial institutions would lead them to maintain a

sufficient buffer against insolvency by actively monitoring and managing their firms' capital and risk positions," the Fed chairman said. The premise failed in the summer of 2007, he said, leaving him "deeply dismayed".<sup>756</sup>

Yet in contrast with Dr. Strangelove, he did not persist in his reasoning and propose to start anew from another thought experiment.

In these different cases, from communism to postwar centralized reasoning, the detached subjectivity of the social revolutions and the financial markets, we have discerned the response of an identification with Technopolis. As Technopolis takes different shapes, these cases differ strongly, but in all of them we have discerned a similar dynamic and deformation. The basic experience we have started with is that of an overwhelming external force that renders one's traditional way of living problematic. Not denying this challenge, we have in this section seen cases of being so drawn to the force of Technopolis, that people have identified with it as the expense of their embedding. Yet as the force is overwhelming, it is not something people can live in. In perpetual-motion mania, life loses the stability from which it can flourish. Drawn by its force and the fantasy of all-might, people leave their embedding behind them, but with this they also lose that from which life gets form and direction, the soil from which it grows. People can seek to develop new stable patterns or forms, but the psychopolitics of identification with Technopolis implies a radical embrace of subjectivity (whether it takes the form of a communist leadership, free individual expression or free-floating financial maximizers), which inherently tends to undermine all such stable forms.

In the response of denial, life becomes form without content, a pose without inner energy. In the response of identification there is a greatly energizing force, but lacking form it burns people up, whether it is in totalitarian movement, the grand and cold architecture of machines, the radical freedom of choice or the volatility of financial markets. In total flux, life is uprooted. Whereas in denial the soil is clung on to, but it becomes a source of inaction, the soil is done away with in identification. This eventually deforms life by depriving it of the stability from which it can grow. In the response of conquest however, there *is* a sense of the danger of Technopolis and the importance of embedding.

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<sup>756</sup> *Wall Street Journal*, February 17th, 2009. Cited from: <http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2009/02/17/greenspan-vs-the-greenspan-doctrine/>

### **C). The Response of Conquest**

#### *Like Heaven's Chariot*

The basic experience from which our psycho-political approach starts is that of an overwhelming external force, Technopolis, which shakes one's traditional way of life to the core. The third response we are turning to here does not fall prey to a denial of this challenge. It fully acknowledges the presence and force of this challenge. Yet this does not lead to an abandonment of the traditional way of life in favor of an identification with Technopolis. In this third response the traditional way of life, one's soil, is held to be of paramount importance. But, to reiterate, this is not a clinging to a traditional world that is more and more being undermined as one sticks one's head in the sand. It is from a certain strength of the traditional embedding that Technopolis is approached.

In the psycho-politics of this third response, the experience of overwhelming force is not acknowledged as an inevitable fact that has to be accepted. The belief is held that the traditional embedding inherently has the capacity to withstand it, but that this is not possible in the present juncture. The traditional embedding is superior to modernity, but in the course of time it has degenerated. Because this culture, from internal dynamics, has lost its vitality and people have become less devoted to it, it is now under threat from an external force. There was a glorious past, in which life was pure and devoted. And because of this, it had vitality and force. Because this devotion and hence vitality has weakened, Technopolis can seem like a more powerful force.

The task then becomes one of retrieving this glorious past. Once this is done, the traditional embedding's strength reemerges, its confidence comes back and the external force can be conquered. By beating modernity, it can be overcome. Modernity is the impetus that can lead to a renaissance and as such, it is an opponent that has to be studied and emulated from the basis of a traditional embedding.

In this last formulation, it seems that there is a genuine engagement with Technopolis in this response. The importance and attachment to embedding is affirmed, while at the same time the challenge of Technopolis is not denied. There seems to be an exchange between the two poles, which hints at the process of transformation, or successfully Embedding Technopolis. Indeed, as we shall see in the next section, there is an affinity between the response of conquest and that of transformation. Especially in phenomena like nation-building and nationalism, we can often discern both responses next to each other and competing with each other. However, the two responses do differ fundamentally.

It is in the focus on overcoming modernity or the nations that are its representative, that this difference is revealed. In both responses we can identify a strongly energizing force. But whereas in transformation, this is the energizing force of being-in-form (fusing the form of tradition with the vitality of Technopolis), in conquest it is a fire of a different nature. By seeking to overcome modernity, conquest of course takes a much more rejectionist stance

towards it than the response of transformation (for which the external challenge is a fact that has to be accepted), but the fire burning here is actually that of a hidden identification with Technopolis. In the focus on overcoming or conquering, there is a certain unease with and distance to the background one is defending. It reveals that the forms of tradition are not 'common sense' or an 'ingrained nexus' that give a confidence from which can be acted.

What we will show in the following discussion is that this stance (in contrast with that of transformation) results from a prior experience, conscious or not, of being cast out of the traditional embedding. The response of conquest emerges with those whose lives are already fundamentally touched and shaped by Technopolis. In this sense, they are already 'bastardized', in the sense that we are using the term here. The response is intimately connected with this condition. One way we can gauge this dynamic is by seeing that here the reference point of action is the external power. Psychologically speaking, the external force has made such a strong impression that it occupies a central place in the goals, dreams, fears and fantasies of the person. This shows that the external force has been 'let in' and occupies a important place in all that matters to the person in life. Moreover, this letting in has happened in a positive sense: the external force appeals to the person. This could have developed through an earlier emersion in the world of Technopolis, in which the individual was somehow rejected by others or disappointed at not obtaining the aspired goals. It could be that the emersion in Technopolis led to such extreme confusion or stress that the person regrets his prior engagement with this world. But it could also be that the person has not really lived in Technopolis and acted accordingly, but simply internally felt the appeal of this world, which has drawn him psychically in its orbit. What is the case in all of these possibilities, is that there is an initial identification with Technopolis. The person has been seduced by its charm and for one of different possible reasons, he comes to reject it. In this sense, the response differs from that of denial. In denial, Technopolis is rejected, but as an external not understood threat that one seeks to ban out. In conquest, one is internally already seduced by modernity and it is important to note that this feeling is being fought. The battle with Technopolis is not just a battle against something external, but is too a great extent an internal battle.

Having come to reject Technopolis, people turn back to their traditional embedding, but their relation to it has become complex and problematic. The embedding is no longer natural to them as they have been cast out of it by Technopolis. There is thus a sense of guilt or inadequacy vis-à-vis the world they embrace. But as it is the world they embrace, this leads to a burning desire to acquire it. The greatest effort is done to internalize the embedding they have lost. Conscious of this lack, these people are highly attentive to signs of true devotion and signs of merely mimicking. Indeed, ever-conscious of the obstacles to real embedding, they need to show their own devotion constantly and seek to outdo others. Prying on others for devotion and realness is driven by an internal experience of being a fake.

Furthermore, the relationship towards the traditional embedding is even more complex than this. People are not just driven to internalize it after its loss as Technopolis has left a deeper mark on them. Having been drawn into Technopolis, they have become bastardized. The

experience of modernity has been internalized and from this they seek to return to embedding. They thus have the external view on the traditional way of life and the reference to modernity is a central psychological dynamic. They not only feel inadequate vis-à-vis the world of embedding, but they also experience this world itself to be inadequate. Having been seduced to see it from the outside, they know its weakness against the world of Technopolis. It is because of this weakness that they see that at core they also have a strong hatred for the world of traditional embedding. As it is, it is not good enough. The central reference point is the rejection of Technopolis and tradition *must* be strong enough to beat it. The fervent desire to be embedded and the acquisition of tradition is thus also an attempt to outdo 'the traditionals' by making tradition stronger. The glorious past that they seek to return to is thus, psychologically speaking, a projection in which they change tradition in reference to the battle for which it is needed.

The psycho-politics of this position derives from a desire to do away with the stressful experience of being in limbo. Technopolis has been internalized, but it is also consciously rejected. Being bastardized, there is a sense of inadequacy in relation to the world of embedding. And having internalized Technopolis, embedding itself is experienced as weak and inadequate. The energy derives from the tremendous tension created in this situation of belonging nowhere. The response of conquest seeks to abolish this tension once and for all by a majestic battle.

This is also why this response has to be understood as a form of deformation. Tradition is not attuned to from a confident and natural sense of embedding, but from a desire to use it to fight a battle. From the outside perspective of Technopolis that views tradition as weak, this tradition is hence also techno-politically appropriated. It is recreated for the desires of the subject who stands detached and outside of it. There is a conscious claim of returning to the past, but in actuality these people are asserting themselves. The power of subjectivity has become paramount. This claim of false consciousness we are making here can be substantiated when we look in the different cases to the way that these people relate to their traditions. What is striking indeed, is that in this response of conquest, usually the adherents lack the classical training and education that went with traditional embedding. Moreover, we will see that they actually come to tradition through the means and stance of Technopolis. This appropriation of tradition manifests an eclectic relation to it that derives from the needs of modern subjects. There is no longer a meaningful order from which they draw their form. In this sense, we find a clear detachment in this response. Whereas a claim is made to go back to tradition, this goes together with a retreat from the way their environment and parental order relate to tradition. This meaningful order is looked down on as the subject recreates tradition for its needs. In this move, the solidness of tradition melts into air.

The actual effect then of this response is a destruction of embedding. The traditional embedding is not a confident background, but something that is mobilized for the battle with Technopolis. We can gauge this by seeing how in the process traditional aspirations and taboos are neutralized. They are pragmatically used and this way deformed. Related to as objects at one's disposal, tradition is politicized for battle. In this sense, the actual effect of the

response of conquest is the undermining of its conscious goals, possibly making it its own worst enemy.

In terms of the relationship to the parental order, whereas denial clings on to it and identification denies it, in conquest the claim is made to restore it. However, it is not the actual parental order that is turned to, but the ideal of it that is psychologically needed. Put differently, the father is recreated stronger in the imagination. The real father is denied. The parental order is denied just like the with the person who gains confidence from boasting of his background, yet at the same time anxiously hides his parents because they do not live up to the image he has created.

An attempt is made to return to one's soil, but the way it is related to is not as a steady ground on which one stands, but as a resource at one's disposal. The approach is technopolitical and this way the soil is spoilt by impatient use. The world of embedding has a confidence from which one can let things happen and it is about an attentiveness to let things grow, as we shall see in the section on transformation. The main concern here however is to reach victory. This is to be achieved with a powerful strike or a bitter war. This way we can also see the power of Technopolis at the heart of this response. While being cloaked as tradition, the fantasy of the all mighty magician is actually realized. The technopolitical appropriation of resources serves to once and for all relieve oneself of the stress of limbo. This is believed to happen in victorious battle, but is even sought for in death. Conquest can thus not achieve a true embedding of Technopolis. This requires the patience and growth to be able to have a constant negotiation from which a great 'form' can emerge. Conquest only seems to walk the middle ground. It is actually driven by a powerful motive to do away with the ambiguity of the middle ground in the imagination.

In the remaining part of this section we will show how this described response of conquest sheds light on the dynamics and motives of movements and fault-lines in global politics. We can discern it in many nation-building and nationalist movements, although as we shall see in the next section, this phenomenon also holds within it the potential of transformation. Specific examples of conquest are the Chinese Boxer Rebellion led by the Righteous Harmony Society, Hindu nationalism in India like the RSS movement, but also Russian slavophiles and the peyote religion of the American Indians. Furthermore, we will see how we can interpret three of the most consequential forces of the last century, imperialist Japan, Nazi Germany and radical Islam, through this lens.

In our discussion of the response of denial, we turned to an interpretation of the Crow tribe of Indians to gain central insights for the investigation, just as for the response of identification we turned to the *Futurist Manifesto*. To shed light on the stance of conquest we will in several instances on a beautiful work of fiction, Rabindranath Tagore's *The Home and the World*. This 1916 novel by an Indian Bengali writer explores the basic experience we are investigating here and specifically the response of conquest in the setting of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century India and the way it is struggling with its identity and the path it should take. The words and thoughts of the main characters show us the world of conquest and its dynamics.



Through them we can elucidate what we see in actual movements around the world. I will thus first briefly sketch the outline of the book. One of the three main characters is Nikhil, an Indian noble who is well-versed in the country's traditions. He is exposed to the influence of Western culture and from a confident position he is able to incorporate elements of it. He for instance 'Indianizes' liberal views in his relationship to his wife Bimala. Nikhil stands for the response we have called transformation. He lives happily with his wife Bimala until his friend Sandip arrives. Sandip is a Hindu nationalist who wants to cast out the British violently. He represents our stance of conquest. Although he turns towards Indian traditions, he hates the passivity of who he calls the 'lotus-eaters'. Cast out of this meaningful tradition, he is drawn to reinterpret it along technopolitical lines. He for instance views nature in a Nietzschean vein:

We are men, we are kings, we must have our tribute. Ever since we have come upon the Earth, we have been plundering her; and the more we claimed, the more she submitted (...) From the bottom of the sea, from underneath the ground, from the very jaws of death, it has all been grabbing and grabbing and grabbing – no strong-box in Nature's store-room has been respected or left unrifled.<sup>757</sup>

He has moved very far from the traditional Indian view of nature. As he acknowledges, he is changing this tradition. According to him "evolution is at work amongst the gods as well" and it is his mission "to modernize the ancient deities"<sup>758</sup>. From the slumber of a tradition she is no longer in touch with, Bimala is intoxicated by the fire that is burning in Sandip. But his fire is not a confident taking up of the challenge that is posed, but a desire to magically strike out the enemy in an intoxication that burns up the people who are touched by it. As Bimala realizes:

How could we help thinking that it was all supernatural? The moment of our history seemed to have dropped into our hand like a jewel from the crown of some drunken god. It has no resemblance to our past; and so we were led to hope that all our wants and miseries would disappear by the spell of some magic charm, that for us there was no longer any boundary line between the possible and the impossible. Everything seemed to be saying to us: "It is coming, it has come!"

Thus we came to cherish the belief that our history needed no steed, but that like heaven's chariot it would move with its own inherent power – At least no wages would have to be paid to the charioteer; only his wine cup would have to be filled again and again. And that in some impossible paradise the goal of our hopes would be reached.<sup>759</sup>

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<sup>757</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, Radford: A & D Publishing, 2008, p. 79

<sup>758</sup> Idem, p. 112

<sup>759</sup> Idem, p. 60

Through this messianic belief in magical victory, the stance of conquest ends up destroying the very tradition it seeks to preserve. In Tagore's story, the intoxication deforms the life of Bimala and the others around Sandip and thus ends up in destruction. We will return to passages of the story in the course of our investigation of the actual instances of conquest in order to gain deeper insight into its dynamic.

### *Instances of Conquest*

In movements of nation-building and nationalism which are directed against foreign powers, we can often discern this response of conquest. As we mentioned in the previous section, traditional China originally took the response of denial to the technopolitical forces of the Europeans. As the stance of identification also spread, using Western dress for instance instead of Chinese dress and as the overwhelming force of Technopolis against tradition became manifest, a different response also emerged. People turned to classical Chinese traditions and mobilized them in the battle against foreign powers. One of the most interesting examples of this was the Boxer Rebellion at the turn of the nineteenth century which was led by the Righteous Harmony Society. The group was identified as boxers because they turned to Chinese martial arts for defense. These people engaged in vigorous exercise to arm themselves. Certain fighting skills were held to have magical powers of destruction and the boxers were also known for showing impossibly-seeming athletics that proved the strength of their traditions. Tsui Hark's movies of the *Once Upon a Time in China* series nicely show these feats of athletics, but also how this went together with intoxication in magical belief. Furthermore, the boxers believed that through their training they could become immune to the bullets of the Westerners.

In this response, the external challenge is thus taken up, but not in the form of a real engagement. Tradition is reinterpreted and mobilized as a technopolitical magic charm that will defeat the enemy. The challenge is met not in reality, but in fantasy. Tsui Hark's movie also shows the fraudulent character of the athletic feats and the self-deception that goes with this it, thus exposing the 'bastardly' nature of this movement. They are contrasted in the movies with Wong Fei-Hung and Sun Yat-Sen, truer heroes, who from a confident embedding seek to engage the external challenge.

In India, we find similar movements that can be interpreted in this light. The Hindu nationalist movement the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) is with several million members after the Chinese Communist Party, the world's largest political movement. Its offshoot, the BJP ruled India from 1998 to 2004, but is also consists of a multitude of youth movements, town organizations and more violent groups.<sup>760</sup> In this movement we can see the mobilization and politicization of tradition in order to conquer the world of Technopolis. According to one of its theories, 'biofuturology', the human brain consists of a right side that is equipped to deal

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<sup>760</sup> E. Luce, *In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India*, London: Little, Brown Book Group, 2006, pp. 144-145

with diversity and a left side that deals with uniformity. Whereas the typical Indian has a right-side brain, the typical European has a left-side brain. This makes the former creative, original, decentralized, but also disorganized. The latter is characterized by organization, centralization and strength, but also lack of imagination. India must for these groups learn how to use the left-side in order to regain the glory of its right-side creativity. But instead of regaining its tradition, it is more of a move towards left-side uniformity and modernization. As Luce notes, the principal organizational unit, the *shakha*, a group that gathers each morning for exercise and the reciting of nationalist stories, is inspired on the semi-militarized cells on which Mussolini's fascist system was built.<sup>761</sup> According to its most influential ideologist, Golwalkar, the cell must be ready to sacrifice itself for the health of the whole body, which reveals a corporatist view of society, that is reminiscent of fascism. The groups have a stern discipline, play only communal sports and train martial arts with airguns and swords as well as the traditional Indian lathi.

Thus seduced already by technopolitical prowess, the movement is to a large extent already detached from its embedding. Historians who publish research that goes against their own view of history are threatened and history is eclectically appropriated to serve their needs. Moreover, tradition is mobilized for a technopolitical battle. In this sense, the classical Hindu idea of *maya*, the veil of ignorance, is reinterpreted as foreign oppression, and the doctrine of enlightenment is held to mean the realization of the country's greatness. It is insightful that Amartya Sen notes that Hindu nationalists often seem to lack a good grasp of Sanskrit.<sup>762</sup> This reveals the bastardization that stands at the root of this response.

Moreover, it is not just the inadequacy of the self vis-à-vis tradition that is a motivational force here, but also an experienced inadequacy of the tradition itself, revealing also the hatred for the traditional world that the self belongs to. The copying of Western unity and organization by Golwalkar thus sprang from a diagnosis that Hinduism had become "too effeminate" over the centuries.<sup>763</sup> The weakness of tradition is hated and thus this tradition has to be put in motion. Tagore's novel provides us with vivid articulations of how tradition is politicized and deformed in this process. Thus for Sandip, the evil demon Ravana is the actual hero of the Hindu epos, the Ramayana. His own restraint after forcefully abducting the princess Sita was according to Sandip his only flaw. The old traditional forms are permeated with a destructive energy. And elsewhere, he shows a new relationship to the classical Hindu goddess Durga. A powerful energetic goddess is cast into a political mold: "I can swear that Durga is a political goddess and was conceived as the image of the Shakti of patriotism in the days when Bengal was praying to be delivered from Mussulman domination".<sup>764</sup>

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<sup>761</sup> Idem, p. 152

<sup>762</sup> A. Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2005, pp. 84-85

<sup>763</sup> E. Luce, *In Spite of the Gods*, p. 153

<sup>764</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, pp. 54 and 84

We have looked at American Indian tribes when we discussed the response of denial. We can however also find the alternative response of conquest among the Indians that is comparable to the Chinese boxers and Hindu nationalists.

Lear relates that in 1889 there was much talk in the reservation of the Sioux Indians of the coming of a messiah.<sup>765</sup> The holy man Wovoka claimed he was the son of God and he is alleged to have introduced the peyote religion to American Indian tribes. This messiah claimed that he would wipe out all the whites in a catastrophe, bring back the ancestors from the dead and restore the buffalo. To make this come about, the Indians would have to perform the 'Ghost Dance' that would make the apocalypse come about. Such a practice compares with the athletic feats of the Chinese Boxers. Like in China, the native Indian practice was ecstatic and people would dance in a frenzy until they dropped down of exhaustion. Indeed, wearing ghost shirts was held to protect the Indians from bullets.

The world of Technopolis is to be countered by a majestic feat of magic. These phenomena harbor the very spirit of Technopolis, the realization of the magician. As such, they do not follow from a stable and confident form of embedding from which people can face reality. The fire that is lit in these groups is the fire of Technopolis. Although in name, they reach out to traditional forms, like the Futurists, they embody restless energy without form and thus have no real 'goddess' to follow. In Tagore's novel, the calm Nikhil unmasks the actual spirit of the nationalists. Seeing it in his wife Bimala, he remarks:

I had hope that when Bimala found herself free in the outer world she would be rescued from her infatuation with tyranny. But now I feel sure that this infatuation is deep down in her nature. Her love is for the boisterous. From the tip of her tongue to the pit of her stomach she must tingle with red pepper in order to enjoy the simple fare of life. (...) What I really feel is this, that those who cannot find food for their enthusiasm in a knowledge of their country as it actually is, or those who cannot love men just because they are men – who needs must shout and deify their country in order to keep up their excitement – these love excitement more than their country.<sup>766</sup>

The infatuation with energy, or "the love of excitement" is the very force we saw in the identification with Technopolis. Life "as it actually is" is not enough and thus we see how this is the stance of the bastardized who are no longer at home in their traditional embedding. It is not a patient taking up of the posed challenge and the attempt to give form to the created tension. Rather, people here seek to do away with the challenge through a grand act of destruction. They try to short circuit the challenge that is posed to them and in a dream in the form of some kind of ritual, victory is to be found. The effect then is a deformation of life. The ritual of the Ghost Dance came to take over the entire life of the Sioux, much life nationalists elsewhere become absorbed in their fantasy world. Symbolic rituals took over life

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<sup>765</sup> J. Lear, *Radical Hope*, p. 149

<sup>766</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, p. 23

through which the demands of real life were avoided.<sup>767</sup> What was there of traditional embedding is cast aside in the infatuation. Acts done in the name of traditional roots end up further uprooting life.<sup>768</sup>

The central fact about those who respond with conquest is that they are bastardized, or put differently, that they live in the state of limbo. They are drawn to both Technopolis and their traditional embedding, but they belong to neither. They are not at home in the world. This ties in with what Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit have described of the phenomenon of Occidentalism. It is the mirror image of the Orientalism (that Edward Said described as the way the West pictured the East in simplified mystical terms from which it could dominate the East) and thus concerns the simplified vision of the West by the rest of the world. This hated vision of the West is not held by the poor of the world. It is held by those who can consume its goods and images and who are in our terms already drawn to it. The radicals are well-educated young men who partly live in modernity.<sup>769</sup> For some reason they come to reject it, but they thus also no longer move naturally in their traditional embedding. They belong to neither world, which causes the psychological tension from which they want to be released. They want to reassert their tradition, but the central fact is that they already look at it from the outside. They see their ‘own people’ locked in ignorance, misery and weakness and in this sense they also look down on them. Tagore provides a penetrating insight into this dynamic. *Swadeshi* is an Indian movement aiming at self-sufficiency. It encourages people to buy local goods instead of importing foreign goods. By the nationalists, it is held as a mark of devotion to the nation. But to a great extent, this hides a prior experience. As Nikhil remarks: “When *Swadeshi* had not yet become a boast, we had despised it with all our hearts”.<sup>770</sup> The pride with which local goods are presented and esteemed operates against a background feeling of not wanting them. One knows that they are held as inferior and *against this* they are affirmed. They are not part of a natural environment in which one is at home, or what we have called proximals, things through which we attend to other elements of a way of life. They become isolated objects, or distals. They exist not as things to be used in a natural environment, as this environment has been neutralized, but they have become politicized objects of contemplation. Those for whom they still are part of a natural environment, are looked down upon, as they do not realize the weakness and misery of tradition ‘as it is’.

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<sup>767</sup> J. Lear, *Radical Hope*, pp. 150-1 In Lear’s words: “It is a hallmark of the wishful that the world will be magically transformed – in conformity with how one would like it to be – without having to take any practical steps to bring it about.”

<sup>768</sup> Nikhil’s response to the passion he sees in others: “I accept the truth of passion”, he said, “only when I recognize the truth of restraint. By pressing what we want to see right into our eyes we only injure them: we do not see. So does the violence of passion, which would leave no space between the mind and its object, defeat its purpose”. R. Tagore, *ibid.*, *The Home and the World*, p. 37

<sup>769</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme: Het Westen in de ogen van zijn vijanden*, Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Atlas, 2004, p. 20

<sup>770</sup> R. Tagore, *The home and the World*, p. 63

There are other examples that shed light on this dynamic of living in limbo and how it leads to the stance of conquest and its energetic fervor. Benedict Anderson notes that the revolutionary independence struggles of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Latin America were not led by the poor of the marginalized minorities, nor any kind of local bourgeois, which democratization theorists would expect.<sup>771</sup> The movements were spearheaded by the children and further descendants of European immigrants. The Spanish crown distrusted them as they were not real Spaniards and thus excluded them from ruling positions. Seeking to centralize power in Madrid, all local rule fell to first-generation immigrants from Spain. This left the American-born Spaniards in a state of limbo. They neither belonged to the Spain of their ancestors, nor did they identify with the culturally different and poorer other ethnicities. In a sense, the independence movements can be seen as attempts to create a home for these people who lived between worlds.<sup>772</sup> Another case in point are the fighters of the Basque ETA movement. Jerrold M. Post notes that members of the ETA are of sociologically marginalized groups. Interesting for our point of view here is that a very high portion of them are of mixed Spanish-Basque descent.<sup>773</sup> They thus literally live in two worlds that collide, making the social tension an interior experience. They, in a physical sense, feel the enemy within. Often reviled as “half-breeds”, these people feel inadequate and guilty in the face of their Basque community. As bastards at loss over their tradition, they attempt to ‘out-Basque the Basques’ in terrorist attacks through which they prove their devotion.

Throughout the world we see how this stance of conquest emerges as a reaction to the modern world of Technopolis. In the last section we for instance described instances of identification in Russia under Peter the Great, Catherine the Great as well as the Soviet Union (often combined or followed by denial). Next to these responses, we can also see a response of conquest in Russian history. With authors like Dmitri Pisarev we see the Darwinian/Nietzschean spirit emerge in Russia: What can be beat down, must be beat down; what can resist the attack is worthy of existence; what goes to pieces is rubbish. Chop yourself a way forcefully, because you cannot do evil.”<sup>774</sup> A shapeless technopolitical energy is released here, which is the same fire we find in nationalists:

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<sup>771</sup> B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (Revised Edition)*, London: Verso, 2006 (1983), Chapter 4 *Creole Pioneers*, pp. 47-66

<sup>772</sup> Of course, the dynamic here is very different from what we have described above. These people originate from the external force (although they are not recognized by it as its children) and this process of nation-building has more to do with the stance of identification of the previous section. The point of comparison here is solely with the revolutionary fervor that is awakened as a result of living between worlds.

<sup>773</sup> J.M. Post, *Leaders and their Followers in a Dangerous World: The Psychology of political Behavior*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004, p. 130. Of the ETA members 44% are of mixed parentage, whereas in the general Basque population, only 8% of the families consist of mixed marriages.

<sup>774</sup> Quoted in I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, p. 97 My translation.

The impotent man says: "That which has come to my share is mine". And the weak man assents. But the lesson of the whole world is: "That is really mine which I can snatch away". My country does not become mine simply because it is the country of my birth. It becomes mine on the day when I am able to win it by force. (...) What my mind covets, my surroundings must supply. This is the only true understanding between our inner and outer nature in this world".<sup>775</sup>

The Nietzschean spirit reinterprets everything technopolitically in terms of resources and the force of subjectivity. For these nationalists, the embedding is no longer present (simply the country of my birth), and is acquired technopolitically (by winning it by force). This is the deformation that comes from the response of conquest.

In Russia, Ivan Kirejevski's life is also a typical illustration of the dynamic we are following here.<sup>776</sup> Brought up in a modern family, he enjoyed Russian as well as Western European high culture. He was particularly drawn to the German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling. Versed in German philosophy however, he turned into a staunch Russian nationalist. Through the concepts of Western philosophy he sought to emancipate Russia from the West. In his views, society was a living organism (a community that slavophiles calls *sobornost*) which he contrasted with the calculative spirit of the West. For him, Western society is based on rotten roots like scholastic rationalism, Teutonic conquest and Roman law. Compared to the Russian soul, the West is merely outward force, lacking depth and form. We find here a similar dynamic to what we saw in the cases of the Indians, Chinese and American Indians. They have been cast out of embedding by Technopolis. They seek to return to it, but it is no longer natural. This makes the approach of embedding eclectic and at heart technopolitical (oriented towards the battle with the enemy) deforming tradition.

In the above discussed cases we encountered specific forms of nationalist fervor that followed the logic of the response of conquest. Next to these more local (but still consequential) cases, the logic of conquest can also shed light on psycho-politics of the Second World War, which profoundly shook the modern world. The Axis powers can be understood as taking the response of conquest and here we will show that with regard to imperial Japan and Nazi Germany. In chapters II and III we already saw that these two countries share many similarities in their path of modernization. We will now focus on another aspect of this similarity. The Second World War was not just an alliance of opportunity between these two countries (although it definitely also was that), but the dynamics within these countries were also to an extent very similar.

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<sup>775</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, p. 25

<sup>776</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, pp. 90-92

Germany's call to the modern adventure came with the armies of Napoleon. Their superiority showed the weakness of Germany's weak organization, its decentralized system and feudal relations. That the way of the future had arrived was expressed by the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel when he stated that in Napoleon's victory in Jena in 1806 he saw "the world-spirit on a horse". Japan's wake up to modernity occurred half a century later with the victory of the American Commodore Matthew Perry's black ships over the Japanese defenses. Both moments trembled the way of life in the two countries and initiated a period of soul-searching. An inner middle ground was opened from which all the responses we describe here emerged, experimenting with paths and looking for a new form.

In Germany, identification took place strongly in Prussia in for instance the military reforms we described in chapter I. A process of transformation also emerged with the grafting of an old work ethic and guild system on top of the modern work place as we described in chapter III. With the unification of the country under Bismarck, modernity was affirmed, embedded, but also placed in a precarious relationship with tradition, like the rule of an emperor. Later in the nineteen-twenties Germany, and especially Berlin, became famous for its libertarian spirit. The roaring twenties saw experimentation in arts like cinema, painting and architecture, but also in social relations.

The black ships led to a period of chaos in Japan, which after the Meiji Restoration of 1868 paralleled the Bismarckian system. There was a very strong impulse to identify with the forces of modernity. Prominent Japanese rulers made visits to Europe and the United States, looking for good new political ideas. To create a new constitution for Japan, they looked at those of the United States (which they deemed to chaotic), Germany as well as Britain and Holland. The Japanese constitution, presented in 1889 was held to be a mark of "Civilization and Enlightenment", or *Bunmei Kaika*, a central slogan of the Meiji era. There was also another important slogan *Fukoku Kyohei*, "rich country, strong army", which already manifests the desire of conquest after identification.<sup>777</sup> In popular culture too, there was a great amount of experimentation and identification with modernity, which like in Germany, had its summit in the nineteen-twenties. Fashionable youths came to be known as *mobos* (modern boys) and *mogas* (modern girls) and a culture emerged mainly in Tokyo's Ginza district that was later described as *ero guru nansensu*, that stood for "erotic, grotesque, nonsensical". Students took a great interest in Western ideas, summed up as DeKanSho ("Descartes, Kant, Schopenhauer") and Western dress and hair styles were viewed as marks of superiority.<sup>778</sup>

At the same time, there were strong currents of conquest in both countries, which overtook the two countries and became dominant in the nineteen-thirties. In Germany this of course came with the rise to power of the Nazis in 1933. For all the modernity of the Nazi movement

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<sup>777</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan*, New York: Modern Library, 2004, pp. 35-38

<sup>778</sup> Idem, pp. 66-69. A satirical saying of the time was: "Knock a head without a top-knot, and you hear the sound of *Bunmei Kaika*", idem, p. 44



(which we encountered above in our discussion of totalitarianism, of which it is an example), a central explicit aim was the restoration of a glorious past. The embrace of and experimentation with modernity was labeled as degenerative and was oppressed. Moreover, modernity's mobility and mixing of people had spoiled the German *Blut und Boden*, which was to be restored. Indeed, in Arendt's great investigation we find the aim of a restoration of the past. Nazi propaganda came together in a concept it called the *Volksgemeinschaft*, which was based on the absolute equality of all Germans, not of modern rights, but of pre-modern nature ( i.e. their race) and through which they were distinguished from all other peoples.<sup>779</sup> And the totalitarian obliteration between the public and the private realm, was meant to "have restored a mysterious irrational wholeness in man".<sup>780</sup> Yet like many interpreters, Arendt mostly focused on the philosophical lineages of Nazi ideology. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke however, has shown the esoteric inspirations of Nazism. Through ideas of *Armanenschaft* and the *Germanenorden*, Nazism can be traced back to the ideas of occult thinkers like Guido von List and Jorg Lanz von Liebenfels.<sup>781</sup> There was a fervent desire in Nazism to return to a glorious past that somehow mixed Aryan purity with the Holy Grail and pagan social organization.

In Japan we also see the slow growth to prominence of the stance of conquest and its attempt at restoring a glorious tradition. In late nineteenth century China, there emerged a doctrine of "Chinese learning for the essential principles, Western learning for the practical applications", of which Japan had a similar version, "Western science, Japanese essence".<sup>782</sup> This Japanese essence consisted of elements like State Shinto with the worship of the emperor and the samurai spirit of bushido, as we saw in Chapter II. In the midst of the war, the Kyoto School held a philosophical conference on "how to resist modernism" through the superior Japanese spirit. The philosopher Nishitani Keiji believed that in the course of modernity, the European communal culture had been destroyed.<sup>783</sup> In Japan, by contrast, the national polity or essence, *kokutai*, could be maintained and would lead to global victory.

We thus see both in Germany and Japan the attempt to address the challenge posed by modernity through a return to the vigor of a traditional embedding. This however did not take the shape of a transformation in which Technopolis is embedded, but instead had the deforming effect of the stance of conquest. The extent to which this happened was different in both cases.

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<sup>779</sup> H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 357

<sup>780</sup> Idem, p. 336

<sup>781</sup> N. Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults and their Influence on Nazi Ideology: The Ariosophists of Austria and Germany 1890-1935*, New York: New York University Press, 1992 (1985)

<sup>782</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan*, pp. 19-20

<sup>783</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, pp. 7 and 12

In the Japanese case, the stances of conquest and transformation strongly vied with each other. The country's war effort exhibits in what way the stance of conquest became dominant and led to deformation, but next to it, there was also a process of transformation. In this sense, the Japanese response was less of a deformation, and much less characterized by bastardization than the German response, as we shall see. This also explains the much greater extent of continuity in Japan with both the period before the war and the period after it if we contrast it with the German case.

For instance, a pillar of the Japanese response was the spreading of the bushido ethic from the samurai class to the population at large. As we have seen in Chapter II (and to which we will return in the next section,) this became a constitutive element of the Japanese economy, even after the war, although the samurai ethic was of course disconnected from its physically violent elements. As such, it was not a technopolitical appropriation of the past, through which it was supposed to magically defeat the external force in a single effort, but it had a much more enduring effect. It grafted a traditional way of life onto modern activity in an enduring manner through which the challenge of Embedding Technopolis has been met in a continuous effort of facing reality.

In the course of the war effort however, this creative act was tilted more towards the response of conquest and its deforming effects. An example of this is how the bushido ethic was invoked in the policy of the *kamikaze* airplanes. This war policy was presented as the ritual suicide (*hara-kiri*) of the samurai for his lord (the emperor in this case).<sup>784</sup> The kamikaze pilot resembles the Native Indian dropping of exhaustion from performing the Ghost Dance. Rather than facing up to the challenge, victory is sought in death. Whereas the bushido ethic also showed a way of giving shape to modern life in all its complexity, in this policy it was a technopolitical tool in the war that promised bliss in one violent gesture.

Moreover, it is important to note that the process of transformation and its internal confidence and orientation become overshadowed by the aim of defeating the enemy, a mark of the logic of conquest. Indeed, the battle was conceived of as a "holy war", or *seisen*, much like Jihad functions in contemporary radical Islam (more on this below). At the core of this deforming response is the external reference of defeating the enemy. The dealing with modernity increasingly came under the view point of achieving *hakko ichiu*, or "uniting the eight corners of the world under one roof", which was of course imperial Japan. With defeating the enemy as the central motivational force, tradition is thus appropriated technopolitically, deforming it and burning it up under its instrumental use. This deformation can be clearly discerned from the belief of hardliners at the end of the war that the *kokutai* ("national essence or polity") would survive forever, even if all Japanese had to die.<sup>785</sup> Tagore, our guide to the psychopolitics of conquest sheds light on this stance. In Sandip's words:

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<sup>784</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, p. 62. In the words of one kamikaze pilot: "I thought of my age, nineteen, and of the proverb: "To die when people will still mourn you, to die when you are still young and fresh; that is truly Bushido". Yes, I followed the way of the samurai." (my translation)

<sup>785</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan*, pp. 111 and 123

“Winning your kind of success”, Nikhil once objected, “is success gained at the cost of the soul: but the soul is greater than success”. (...) “Where our country makes itself the final object, it gains success at the cost of the soul. Where it recognizes the Greatest as greater than all, there it may miss success, but gain its soul”. (...) [Sandip’s response:] We must have our religion and also our nationalism; our Bhagavadgita and also our Bande Mataram. The result is that both of them suffer. It is like performing with an English military band, side by side with our Indian festive pipes. I must make it the purpose of my life to put an end to this hideous confusion. I want the Western military style to prevail, not the Indian.<sup>786</sup>

We can also approach this dynamic of an impulse towards transformation that becomes overshadowed by the deformation of conquest from a different angle. According to Buruma, one of the reasons why Japan could relatively easily respond to the challenge of the West was that in its history it had already defined its culture in relation to a foreign cultural source, namely China.<sup>787</sup> With Western superiority, the country thus had a tradition from which they could shift their orientation to another foreign source. And from this tradition, a genuine study of, and exchange with the West, resulted. And after almost a century after 1853 of orientation on the West, Japan once again oriented itself and defined itself in relation to Asia. Philosophers believed it could hold the great dialogue between East and West. But through the central focus on military conquest, this impulse was deformed. Instead of from a traditional embedding, the rest of Asia was approached from the technopolitical imperative of having colonies. The “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” turned out into the brutal colonization and exploitation of the peoples of China, Korea, Taiwan and South-East Asia, that was in many ways more oppressive than their colonization by the West. It was the technopolitical fantasy of the magician’s all-might that determined Japan’s engagement with the rest of Asia. Although asserting Asian independence, at bottom it was a hatred of Asian weakness that drove the Japanese. The shift of orientation to the West and then back to the East was in this case not a process of transformation but one of deformation. The life of the artist Takamura Kotaro is in this sense exemplary for this dynamic. He had been an individualist, deeply interested in European art and extensively travelled throughout the West. Back in Japan, he hated his own people who he addressed in a poem as “monkey-like, fox-like, squirrel-like, gudgeon-like, minnow-like, potsherd-like, gargoyle-faced Japanese”. In the course of the nineteen-twenties he came to reassess his Western experiences and eventually became a staunch nationalist. He glorified Japanese militarism in China and became xenophobic.<sup>788</sup> It is the psychological dynamic of returning to one’s tradition, but from an external perspective that has placed a hatred of this tradition at its core.

We thus see how we can understand Japanese militarism in terms of the response of conquest and its concomitant deformation. At the same time, we have seen how process went together with a more genuine attempt at transformation. In this sense, Japan in the second quarter of

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<sup>786</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, p. 52

<sup>787</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan*, pp. 50-51 and 114

<sup>788</sup> Idem, pp. 79-80

the twentieth century differs from Germany over the same period. Apart from of course the overt militarism, we can see a stronger continuity with the Japan of before and after that period (at the dismay of many of its neighbors). The balance between the responses of conquest and transformation has been very precarious in the country. Japanese conquest was tied with and vied with a very firm embedding in tradition. This can be seen from the actors that engaged in Japan's conquest. Its elite was still the old elite and as such it consisted of prominent families and leaders who were from a samurai background. As such, they were steeped in the old traditions and schooling of the country. Furthermore, the head of Japan's war effort remained the emperor from Japan's classical lineage. Its militarism led to a deformation as we saw, but there was a counterforce to the dynamic of bastardization that went together with this response. As such, the country could discard the worst bastardly elements of the regime after the war and pursue more of a path of transformation. Although deprived of his power, Hirohito remained the emperor of Japan, an institution that persists to this day. And in chapter II we saw how the economic organization of the country also had much continuity with the previous period.

In Germany by contrast, the stance of conquest was much more radical. It literally went together with the grasping of power by the bastardized, who after the war were again removed. As Hannah Arendt notes, the social basis of the totalitarian system as it developed in Nazi Germany were the modern masses who were characterized by a sense of uprootedness and superfluity: "To be uprooted means to have no place in the world, recognized and guaranteed by others; to be superfluous means not to belong to the world at all".<sup>789</sup> The leaders of the totalitarian organization came from outside the class and national system of European society. And not being embedded in the world as a home, bastardized, they were driven by a deep "yearning of losing themselves".<sup>790</sup> Next to the leadership and the masses, Arendt cites K. Heiden who describes the intellectuals of the Nazi movement as "armed bohemians, to whom war is home and civil war fatherland".<sup>791</sup> The condition of disembeddedness is the central motivational drive in their thought. And thus Tagore poignantly says of this type: "His intellect is keen, but his nature is coarse, and so he glorifies his selfish lusts under high-sounding names".<sup>792</sup>

Just as we saw that a bastardization of the tradition and a technopolitical approach to the world took hold of imperial Japan, this dynamic was even more central in Nazi Germany. Echoing the technopolitical views of Cecil Rhodes, whom we quoted in the previous chapter, Himmler spoke of his men as those "who were not interested in "everyday problems" but only "in ideological questions of importance for decades and centuries, so that man... knows he is

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<sup>789</sup> H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 475

<sup>790</sup> Idem, p. 327

<sup>791</sup> Idem, p. 317

<sup>792</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, p. 23

working for a great task which occurs but once in 2,000 years”<sup>793</sup> In this expression we see the fantasy of the magician’s all-might. Citing Eric Voegelin, Arendt comes to this point when she describes totalitarianism as the last stage in a process during which “science [has become] an idol that will magically cure the evils of existence and transform the nature of man”.<sup>794</sup> Thus although the claim is made that a return is made to a pure and glorious past, Technopolis has affected this stance in the form of bastardization, which places a detachment at the core of this return to a *Volks-gemeinschaft*. Although modernity is rejected, at the core of this movement stands the detached magician for whom there is no natural order and everything is possible. The return to the community of the people was expressed in the will of the *Führer*, which was an unbound and formless energy that flew in the face of any kind of embedding. Moreover, although the claim was made to counter the modern mixing of races and retrieve an ancient culture, the concept of race itself is a modern concept. From the before-mentioned esoteric writers to Arthur de Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, the race doctrine on which the Nazi movement drew was filled with pseudo-scientific justification. More to the point, the doctrine itself expresses a technopolitical version of culture. In traditional embedded cultures, we have seen that the world in itself has a meaningful order and a sacral dimension to which man must attune. The doctrine of racism makes the world in itself neutral, a field of natural resources over which a quasi-Darwinian battle is fought, and a collective subject, the race, becomes the source of value. It is not the world that merits and inspires greatness, but the race that creates it. There is not a natural order that needs to be followed, but only a technopolitical motion of perpetual struggle.

Furthermore, the form of organization of continuously replicating layers that we described in the previous section, serves to magically shield off everyone from the dictates of reality. In this sense, it also resembles the Ghost Dance of the American Indians and the athletics of the Chinese Boxers, who through ritual, remain intoxicated of the omnipotence of movement, without having to face an external reality.<sup>795</sup>

Finally, we can cite Hannah Arendt again to see how the Nazi return to a tradition was a response of conquest and thus masks a bastardization at its root through an identification with Technopolis. She describes the fantasy of the magician in a much more destructive version than we saw with Cecil Rhodes or Dr. Strangelove:

Suddenly it becomes evident that things which for thousands of years the human imagination had banished to a realm beyond human competence can be manufactured right here on earth, that Hell and Purgatory, and even a

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<sup>793</sup> H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 316

<sup>794</sup> Idem, p. 346

<sup>795</sup> “The totalitarian ruler must, at any price, prevent normalization from reaching the point where a new way of life could develop – one which might, after a time, lose its *bastard qualities* and take its place among the widely differing and profoundly contrasting ways of life of the nations of the earth”, H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 391( my italics)

shadow of perpetual duration, can be established by the most modern methods of destruction and therapy. To these people ( and they are more numerous in any large city that we like to admit) the totalitarian hell proves only that the power of man is greater than they ever dared to think, and that man can realize hellish fantasies without making the sky fall or the earth open.<sup>796</sup>

And as Nazi Germany is an example of the response of conquest, its attempt at finding an embedding only ends in deformation. Just like in imperial Japan, the hatred of the enemy, the Jewish conspiracy or “mechanical Americanism”<sup>797</sup>, was the central motivation of action. It occupies the central place in the mind, for which everything else is burnt up in mobilized. It was the destruction that mattered, the will to sacrifice, the sign of devotion, more than a vision of what was worth living for.<sup>798</sup> The contradictory nature of the response of conquest is manifested in Nazi architecture.<sup>799</sup> Nazi thought was strongly anti-urban. It was believed that the Nordic people were essentially farmers, never successful at founding cities and were even nearly destroyed by them. Its newspaper the *Volkische Beobachter* describes the metropolis as “the melting-pot of all evil... of prostitution, bars, illness, movies, Marxism, Jews, strippers, Negro dances, and all the disgusting offspring of so-called ‘modern art’.”<sup>800</sup> Policies initially also focused on the *Kleinsiedlungen* at the edge of big cities. However, the return to tradition in the mode of conquest is done from an outside perspective. Traditional embedding is not internally felt. Moreover, the central reference is the external enemy and the desire to outdo him is strength and force. Adolf Hitler and his architect Albert Speer thus had plans to turn Berlin into a tremendous mechanized city of parade and spectacle. They had technopolitical plans in which Berlin was to have an east-west axis two-and-a-half times as large as the Champs-Élysées with a great dome and arch on it. “Why always the biggest?”, Hitler asked rhetorically. “I do this to restore to each individual German his self-respect”.<sup>801</sup> Little of this was realized, but it reveals the contradictory and deforming effect of the stance of conquest.

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<sup>796</sup> H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 446

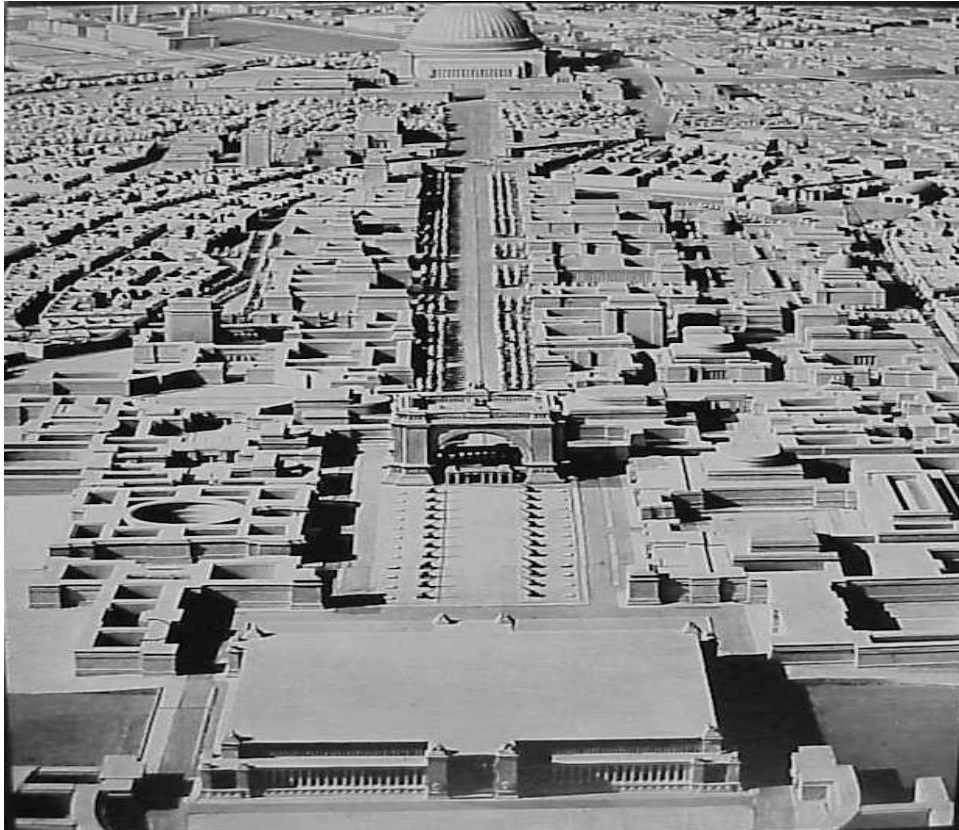
<sup>797</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, p. 13

<sup>798</sup> R. Tagore describes how in the context of Indian nationalism, tradition is reinterpreted and mobilized to serve the desire for battle: “Hate is also an adjunct of worship. Arjuna won Mahadeva’s favour by wrestling with him. God will be with us in the end, if we are prepared to give Him battle”, *The Home and the World*, p. 19

<sup>799</sup> P. Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow*, pp. 211-214

<sup>800</sup> Idem, p. 211

<sup>801</sup> Idem, p. 213



Furthermore, this same effect is described by Arendt in regard to the idea of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. The idea gradually lost importance as the Nazis rose to power and gave way simultaneously to a greater contempt for large parts of German society and the expansionist desire to incorporate other Aryan societies in their plans.<sup>803</sup> The claim to an old form of embedding gives way to pragmatic treatment of the community and masks an underlying detachment from it: “if the totalitarian conqueror conducts himself everywhere as though he were at home, by the same token he must treat his own population as though he were a foreign conqueror”.<sup>804</sup> There is at root a bastardization and a self-hate that ends up destroying the very tradition and community it claims to uphold.

From our investigation of local nationalist movements and the dynamic of Nazi Germany and imperial Japan, we can now turn to a central contemporary movement that can be understood through the lens of the response of conquest. The upsurge of radical Islam from the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 to the 9/11 attacks in 2001 has stirred global dynamics over the last

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<sup>802</sup> Source: <http://www.german-architecture.info/GERMANY/TEN/009-berlin3ke.jpg>

<sup>803</sup> H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 360. It is the same paradoxical stance as the *kokutai* surviving even if all Japanese are sacrificed.

<sup>804</sup> Idem, p. 416

few decades. As we will now argue, the psycho-politics of radical Islam is that of the response of conquest.

Initially, this claim might seem strange. Radical Islam can and has often been understood as an a phenomenon that is inherent to Muslim civilization, which would thus classify it more as the stance of denial. Scholars like Bernard Lewis and activists like Ayaan Hirsi Ali have argued that elements in traditional Islam are inimical to modernization. Grasping on to an archaic morality, radicals reject modernity. Bernard Lewis has for instance traced suicide attacks back to the ancient Islamic group of the ‘Assassins’ who targeted impious leaders.<sup>805</sup> In this widely held view, radical Islam thus represents a traditional form of embedding that revolts against external influences. Indeed, among radicals we see the complete rejection of the modern world and the attempt to return to a better past. One often-stated goal is that of re-establishing the ancient institution of the caliphate. Sayyid Qutb, one of the prominent inspirations for radicals, to whom we will return more extensively below, rejected the idea that man can be the source of values and legislation.<sup>806</sup> It is thus a rejection of the subjectivity, which we described as a constitutive element of Technopolis.

However, as we have seen clearly above, the claim to return to the past in itself does not necessarily mean that we are dealing with those who are speaking from a traditional embedding. Radical Islam actually is an example of the response of conquest and its concomitant deformation.

In contrast with the stance of denial, in conquest people have already ‘let modernity in’, been bastardized by it, which then determines their relationship to their traditional embedding. To the extent that bastardization has taken place and the revenge on Technopolis becomes central in people’s concerns, a destructive and deforming impulse emerges.

The sociologist Manuel Castells has shown how Islamist terrorist groups are organized according to the principles of what he calls the Network Society. Moreover, these groups use modern media in a way that also shows their highly modern character.<sup>807</sup> But there are more psychological signs of the way modernity has touched and shaped the outlook of radical Islamists. The above-mentioned prominent ideologist Sayyid Qutb for instance came to rediscover Islam when he was sent to the United States. Indeed, in the stress of living in the West, he claimed to have been ‘reborn’. He noted the carnal temptations from promiscuous women, which were an important source for him to finally denounce the United States.<sup>808</sup> In his letters to home, he wrote on the general “atmosphere of temptation”, the lack of spiritual

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<sup>805</sup> B. Lewis, *Het Midden-Oosten: 2000 jaar culturele en politieke geschiedenis*, Amsterdam: De Boekerij, 2004 (1995), p. 99

<sup>806</sup> G. Kepel, *The Roots of Radical Islam*, London: SAQI, 2005 (1985), p. 43

<sup>807</sup> M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*, Malden: Blackwell publishing, 2004 (1997), pp. 135-140

<sup>808</sup> G. Kepel, *The Roots of Radical Islam*, p. 39



and esthetic reflection and his longing for a conversation that was not about “money, movie stars or car models”.<sup>809</sup>

Another aspect of the way in which modernity has already profoundly touched radical Islamists is through the high level of modern education that their front leaders have followed. The attackers of 9/11 were graduate engineering students from Hamburg Technical University, Osama Bin Laden graduated in economics and public administration, whereas Muhammad al-Zawahiri is a physician from a leading intellectual family in Egypt.<sup>810</sup>

It must thus be clear that what we are dealing with here is not some kind of ‘primordial reaction’ like in the case of the Crow tribe. The world of Technopolis is here felt within, is seductive, has partially been internalized and this way it shapes the lives of the radicals. They have been placed outside of their traditional embedding and feel the force of Technopolis, which profoundly troubles them. They have been bastardized and from this they follow the logic of conquest.

In regard to the traditional embedding, they can thus be characterized as inadequate. The traditional form of embedding is no longer something natural to them that gives their life form and direction. It is important to note that the ideologues of the movement do not have classical schooling in the Islamic tradition. They do not come from the class of religious leaders, *ulemas*, and this way they are not brought in-form like a craftsman by his teacher. Olivier Roy notes that on the internet sites that unite Islamists there is a direct identification between the journey of a self and the religion of Islam. There is no mediation from interpreters or classical scholarship through which people are initiated in the Islamic tradition. He hence describes this community of Muslims (*ummah*) as a *virtual ummah*.<sup>811</sup> Furthermore, the identification of dangers and the anti-Semitism of these groups derives from modern sources like the Protocols of the Elders of Zion (to whom the Nazis and Soviets also referred) and Western Holocaust-deniers rather than medieval Islamic theologians. Moreover, Roy notes, the social basis of radical Muslims, especially in the West, consists of outcasts from educated middle class and dropouts from the working class, the same social basis from which earlier radical leftists movements emerged.<sup>812</sup> A bastardization stands at the root of this phenomenon.

Now the logic of conquest starts from internally being touched by Technopolis, which casts people out of their embedding, bastardizing them as their tradition no longer comes natural to them. But the attempt here is not just to retrieve this embedding in its traditional form. As people are touched by modernity and its external view, their traditional embedding as it is, is experienced by them as inadequate. The seduction they feel has to be destroyed and so

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<sup>809</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, pp. 36 and 118

<sup>810</sup> M. Castells, *The Power of Identity*, pp. 123-125

<sup>811</sup> O. Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, New York: Columbia University, 2004, p. 184

<sup>812</sup> Idem, pp. 46-49

tradition must be mobilized and made stronger for battle. As it is, it is looked down upon and experienced as an embarrassment.

Indeed, radical Islam strongly denounces the Muslim world as it is. Radicals under the regime of Nasser in Egypt no longer viewed their society as a whole as Muslims, an accusation called *takfir*. It is an excommunication from the faithful community, which could even exclude the excommunicated from protection under the law. As such, it is a very serious accusation and traditionally *ulemas* have been very reluctant to use it for fear of discord and sedition.<sup>813</sup> Radicals thus not only part from these ranks, but they denounce the world that this practice belongs to. A related conceptual shift is the description of the current world as *jahiliyya*, ‘a state of ignorance’, a term that was traditionally used to describe the world before the religion of Islam was revealed. The term is thus used in a different and very broad context. As Qutb wrote:

Any society that is not Muslim is jahiliyya... as is any society in which something other than God alone is worshipped... Thus, we must include in this category all the societies that now exist on earth!<sup>814</sup>

Qutb’s work *Signposts* (which in more than one way is to radical Islam what Lenin’s *What is to be done?* was to communism), starts from an explicit detachment from society. By declaring it in a state of ignorance, the entire world, including one’s social embedding, is neutralized. In this view, ruling families but also the class of theologians, have made authoritative interpretations of the faith to grant themselves special powers. As such, they should be wholesale rejected. For Qutb, a true society of believers is built up from below, emanated “from a hidden source”, individuals bonds together in small groups, from which “the battle begins [for] this nascent society that has declared its secession”.<sup>815</sup>

The comparison with Lenin’s mentioned work is apt not only because it describes the tactics for an emerging movement, but also because Qutb takes from Lenin the specific concept of the ‘vanguard’. As the masses are unorganized and lack direction, people should not wait for the revolution to happen by itself. Instead an initiated and highly disciplined elite, the vanguard should detach itself from society and mold it to bring about the revolution.<sup>816</sup> Qutb describes the Muslim vanguard that should detach itself from society and look for signposts to engage or withdraw from it again. From such views, subsequent radicals have denounced all

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<sup>813</sup> G. Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002, p. 31

<sup>814</sup> Quoted from G. Kepel, *The Roots of Radical Islam*, p. 46

<sup>815</sup> G. Kepel, *Jihad*, p. 53

<sup>816</sup> W.I. Lenin, ‘What is to be Done?’ (1929) in: H. M. Christman, *Essential Works of Lenin*, New York: Dover Publications, 1987 (1966), pp. 53-175

the legal traditions in Islam, which opens the door to indiscriminate attacks on mosques too. The title of al-Zawahiri's text *Knights under the Prophet's Banner*, a text which continued on the concept of the vanguard, reveals the conceptualization of a heroic struggle against omnipresent dark forces. This heroic energy, the denouncing of tradition as well as the inspiration from Lenin bring to mind the spirit of the *Futurist Manifesto* and thus show the hidden identification with Technopolis within the stance of conquest.

Furthermore, the revolt against tradition in the name of tradition can also be seen in the case of radical Islamists that were raised in the West. Rather than following the ideas and morality of their parents who emigrated to the West, they retreat from it. They abandon the communities in which they were raised as well as the mosques they went to in their youth. What is important in these cases is that these children were born in Western societies and from this they have internalized the modern gaze on their parents' traditions. They view them as weak, second-rate citizens and slavish in their dealing with modern society. Whereas these communities as we saw above often follow the response of denial, their children, being bastardized, come to view these traditions as dead. In this sense, it is important also to note that these radicals view themselves first and foremost as Muslims, thus denying the richness of the specific culture they were from, be it Pakistani, Moroccan or Algerian. Another illustration of this dynamic of bastardization and the revolt against the weak father comes from a survey cited by Castells. Of the militants in Tunisia, 48% had fathers who are illiterate and who moved from rural areas to the cities in the past decades.<sup>817</sup>

Now in the stance of conquest, the bastardized thus perceive their traditional embedding as weak and inadequate which causes them to technopolitically reorganize it. A first way we can see this is through what Roy describes as the making "explicit" of tradition.<sup>818</sup> No longer in a "pristine culture" or embedding, tradition is scrutinized for signs of decay and purified. This way, the traditional world is objectified, a mark of Technopolis. Intense scrutiny of practices and the devotion of individuals creates a strong sense of tension. As people are bastardized, they no longer belong to a community of tact, in which there is a natural order in which the individual moves freely. Put in terms of other concepts we have used for the situation of embedding, the structure of proximal and distal collapses. The proximal is the thing or practice that is internalized, close to the individual, from which the individual attends to other things. By making everything explicit, this structure is no longer proximate in the background, but transformed into the distal, the objects under scrutiny.<sup>819</sup> Rather than being an internalized second nature, religion becomes something that continuously has to be formulated and delineated from that which it is not.

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<sup>817</sup> M. Castells, *Jihad*, p. 19

<sup>818</sup> O. Roy, *Globalized Islam*, pp. 22-25

<sup>819</sup> We are comparing here the dynamic from ingrained tact to theoretical scrutiny with that of a proximal to a distal. In both cases, what is close by and in the background becomes something that is placed *before and against* the individual. The nature of religious doctrines becoming objects of scrutiny is of course different from an incorporated tool that ceases to work and then similarly becomes an object of scrutiny.

Moreover, the direct relationship between the self and the divine, without institutional intermediaries, represents the technopolitical element of subjectivization. Islam becomes a matter of personal conviction, the outcome of an individual itinerary. The self becomes central and faith becomes the truth, not religion. In this sense, radical Islam parallels the development of New Age, in which religiosity supersedes religion.<sup>820</sup> Or to refer back to Tagore, to be modern is “to acknowledge and respect passion as the supreme reality”.<sup>821</sup> For laymen like Osama bin Laden to declare religious laws and judge the world in its entirety is the victory of the mobile personality or the stance of the magician in Islam. Their “coarse natures” compel their “keen intellects” to reinterpret religion for their base wishes.<sup>822</sup>

As religion becomes a personal experience, it no longer refers back to a legacy or discursive reasoning. Appeal is made to symbols that directly touch the individual rather than to classical teaching. Very incisive from this perspective is the imagery of Osama bin Laden as a type of contemporary Che Guevara. This brings us to another aspect of the way the stance of conquest reorganizes tradition for its personal need of battling Technopolis, by politicizing it. Thus the Iranian religious leader ayatollah Khomeini, like the thinker Ali Shari’ati before him<sup>823</sup>, cast Islam into neo-Marxist terms. Muslims “should cut the cruel hands of the oppressors and world-devouring plunderers, especially the United States, from the region”.<sup>824</sup> And as Roy notes, *jihad* is not one of the five pillars of Islam and it is therefore a collective duty under certain circumstances.<sup>825</sup> For radicals, it has become a permanent and individual duty that never stops, politicizing it like the dialectic of history or the struggle between the races. It is thus also relevant to note that the attacks are directed at imperialist powers and their symbols. It are not in the first place Christian churches that are hated and targeted, but Technopolis’ symbols of political and economic power. The doctrine that the whole world is in a state of ignorance mirrors the reinterpretation of the idea of the veil of ignorance (*maya*) by radical Hindus as the domination of foreign powers.

And in contrast with the response of transformation, the reinterpretation of tradition in the response of conquest is not done in order to embed modernity, accepting its existence as a reality to be dealt with and giving it a certain shape. Modernity is to be overcome, destroying

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<sup>820</sup> Idem, pp. 38 and 6

<sup>821</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, p. 39

<sup>822</sup> Thus some of the 9/11 hijackers were drinking alcohol before boarding and attempted to hire a prostitute the night before. Roy aptly notes that although there is an idea of *taqya*, of hiding one’s ideas, in radicalism, this is an innovation and furthermore, that every secret agent knows that he should do nothing to attract attention. O. Roy, *Globalized Islam*, p. 52

<sup>823</sup> I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, p. 110

<sup>824</sup> J.M. Post, *Leaders and their Followers in a Dangerous World*, p. 136 Interesting about Iran is that radical Islamists did seize power here. The prior identification with Technopolis that is typical of the stance of conquest can in the country be seen in the regime of the shah that was toppled. That regime was the Weimar of Iran.

<sup>825</sup> O. Roy, *Globalized Islam*, p. 41

it with a magical strike. The radicals do not accept a middle ground, the grey zone in which modernity is dealt with and from which life can reemerge in-form. With one leap of faith, modernity is to be denied in every action, but dissolving it only in the imagination.

In the stance of conquest, the central motivational force is the destruction of the enemy, for which everything must be mobilized and through which life is thus deformed. Like imperial Japan or Nazi Germany, radical Islamists believe the modern world is only external strength which can easily be defeated by greater spirit: “The American will never win, because they love Pepsi-Cola and we love death”.<sup>826</sup> And like the communists, they believed that from a single strike, the enemy would collapse under “permanent revolution”. The modern world would fall apart in fear and people would take to the streets throughout the Islamic world.<sup>827</sup> And although the radical Islamists do not seek to become immune to bullets, their Ghost Dance can only end in exhaustion as they have not taken up the task of embedding Technopolis. But perhaps others in their wake will.

## **D). The Response of Transformation**

### *Grasping Transformation*

We have now reached the point at which we can draw final conclusions from this entire investigation. In the course of this endeavor we have been looking at the question how the universal process of modernization relates to local traditions deriving from traditional culture and what this relationship implies for the human condition. In the first three chapters we looked at and answered the first part of this question. In chapters IV and V we are looking at the second part. We saw that in terms of the human condition, modernity can be understood as the unfolding of what we called Technopolis. Local traditions by contrast can be understood through the concepts and dynamics of Embeddedness. After that we have looked in this chapter at how these two forces in the human condition come together.

At this point the possibility of a successful bonding of the two, of embedding Technopolis, might seem bleak. We have discussed three types of ways in which Technopolis and embedding can relate to each other that all resulted in a deformation of the human condition. After this descent into vexing examples of deformation in the modern world, we may wonder in what way we can conceive of an ascending path.

However, we do have enough actual evidence before us from which we can distill the contours and shape of the embedding of Technopolis. The deforming responses can cloud our

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<sup>826</sup> A Taliban warrior quoted in I. Buruma, A. Margalit, *Occidentalisme*, p. 52 (my translation)

<sup>827</sup> O. Roy, *Globalized Islam*, pp. 55-57

vision, but our empirical investigation in the second and third chapter showed us ample evidence that societies do manage to bond tradition with modernity. This suggests to us that the human longing for embedding and a concomitant creative capacity is a potent force in history. How this can be understood in terms of the human condition is what we need to look at here.

The basic experience, through which we have conceptualized the starting point for engagement between modernity and tradition, is that of the infringement of an overwhelming external force that renders one's ingrained way of life problematic. The stance of denial instinctively feels the need of remaining embedded and the only way this can be done is by pretending the external force is not there. As a result of its overwhelming force, it however will eat away at the edges of this way of life, deprive it of its naturalness and museumify it. In denial, the challenge of Technopolis is not taken up, leaving the traditional embedding to shrivel in rigidity. This dynamic is clearly perceived in the stance of identification. Mesmerized by the force of Technopolis and disgusted by the ossification of tradition, in this stance people attack their traditions and seek to incorporate the vitality of Technopolis. But as its external force is overwhelming, it is not a life that humans can live and they are burnt up in its formless energy. Both these responses are elementary and cannot bring together the elements of tradition and modernity. However, their radical opposition creates an inner middle ground through the tension of their relationship. They represent opposite poles, or hypostases, in a field that requires experimentation, adaptation and negotiation. The response of conquest in itself creatively deals with both polar sides, but does not yield an enduring solution to the problem that is posed and we thus need to distinguish it from the response of transformation. The stance of conquest starts from an identification with or seduction by Technopolis which it then seeks to battle. Overcoming modernity is the primary drive and it determines the relationship to traditional embedding. Although a return is claimed, the traditional embedding is actually technopolitically mobilized for battle. The surge of energy that is felt is in actuality the 'fanatical' and 'insane' burning up in Technopolis rather than the energy that comes from being-in-form. As Bimala relates in Tagore's story: "When the knife was busy with my life's most intimate tie, my mind was so clouded with fumes of intoxicating gas that I was not in the least aware of what a cruel thing was happening".<sup>828</sup> To see how this differs from the stance of transformation, we might again turn to a passage from the story. The nationalist Sandip exclaims: "But the real thing is that we have this burning at heart (...) While we are on fire let us seethe and boil". Nikhil's teacher responds:

Chandranath Babu smiled. "Seethe by all means", he said, "but do not mistake it for work, or heroism. Nations which have got on in the world have done so by action, not by ebullition. Those who have always lain in dread

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<sup>828</sup> R. Tagore, *The Home and the World*, pp. 30-31

of work, when with a start they awake to their sorry plight, they look to short-cuts and scamping for their deliverance<sup>829</sup>.

The stance of conquest seeks a short-cut to the task at hand by with a magical strike relieving itself of the created tension. Because one is bastardized, life does not have the form from which the confidence emerges to ponder within the tension. This requires “action” and “heroism”, which implies accepting in the first place that life has been altered in a fundamental sense and the complexity that comes with this. This is no defeatism, but the facing up to a reality, for which there is no silver bullet, but instead the task of working on it. The confidence for this is only possible when the traditional embedding still has some form of self-evidentiary naturalness to it, when it is still an ingrained nexus or a second nature. Transformation is thus possible when life is not bastardized and we need to look at how this is made possible. From this confident embedding and the realization that the context of life has fundamentally been altered, the embedding can creatively and instinctively be transformed for this new context. What we have seen is that the effect of Technopolis is to sweep away the outward habitat in which traditional life took place. The warrior and his weapons, the craftsman and his tools, the house of one’s ancestors and the land on which was worked, are all put under pressure in modernity. Now the creative task we are speaking of here, concerns a disconnection of the *spirit* from the activities in their traditional context and its projection on to the plain of modernity. The internal ethos of the traditional way of life then comes to inhabit the context of modern life.

In denial, one clings on to one’s soil, but in the manner of a coffin that freezes life. In identification, one seeks to do away with any soil, which leads to an uprooting and thus withering of life. In conquest, one impatiently uses the soil for better plants, through which it is made barren. In transformation, the soil is understood as the ground on which one stands and from which one needs to depart. With patience, the attempt is made to let a new plant grow on old soil.

In denial, the parental order is held on to, even though it has become clear that it can no longer be a guide for contemporary life. Identification is the attempt to do away with the parental order, burn one’s bridges, and this way it is faced with the problem of becoming centrifugal from the loss of direction. Conquest is the re-creation of the parental order in the imagination at the expense of the real order and thus draws life into a phantasmagoric reality. Transformation starts with the acknowledgment that on the one hand the parental order is a guide, but on the other hand that one’s parents do not know the world in which one lives. The creative task is to see in what way the guidance of one’s parents can be placed in a context for which it was not intended, but which it can still give form to.

Whereas the conservative delves into the past to condemn the present, this move into the past makes it possible to go further in the present and future. As the past is not a transparent

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<sup>829</sup> Idem, pp. 36-37

object, but a living inheritance, it is in the process thus transformed. The tact of tradition instinctively finds its way and shapes the present. As a result of this, modernity itself is also transformed, what we have described as Multiple Modernities. A living tradition as well as modernity itself are thus *both transformed* to create a third entity, an embedding of Technopolis. The relationship between tradition and modernity can thus be described as symbiotic in the literal sense of living (life, *bios*) together (*syn*). Both are bonded together, supplementing each other and standing in dependence on each other. Whereas in biology symbiosis concerns two distinct species, here we use it in the strong sense of a new combined way of life that has emerged. In this sense we might also speak of a *blending* of tradition with modernity.

We will describe this dynamic of bonding or even blending together and we will also see that no symbiosis is a perennial solution. Symbiosis can cast life into form, ignite and energize it, but a tenseness in the relationship between Technopolis and embeddedness remains. As a result, in time, a symbiosis can collapse, which again will require a creative response to the challenge that is posed.

But throughout this investigation it has become clear that the universal outward manifestation of Technopolis is not the entire story of the human condition in modernity. Underneath it, through it, and inhabiting it, the powerful human force of embedding bursts through. Universalizing tendencies are sweeping the earth, but what is most obviously visible might not be the core of the matter. The fate of traditional culture might be gauged better when we discern its vibrancy underneath the surface of a modern metropolis than by turning towards reservations or provincial dialects.

What we need to do next is describe more specifically in what way and through what channels the response of transformation comes about. Once we have done that, we have to ask how an Embedding of Technopolis evolves through time. Finally, we can try in the final part to venture into the future and ask what the prospects are for Embedding Technopolis globally. But first we thus need to understand better how it comes about in the human condition. More precisely, how can we understand the phenomena we encountered in the second and third chapter where tradition permeates modernity in terms of the concepts of embeddedness?

### *The Anatomy of Transformation*

The first evidence that we got in our empirical investigation that something more was at stake in our contemporary world than the unfolding of universal modernization, came from our discussion of the importance of institutions and ethos in the structures of modernity. When we looked at the state in East Asia, we saw that its effectiveness as a modern structure rested to a large extent on pre-modern origins. Its strength and capacity depends on a coherent sense of



responsibility and esprit de corps among bureaucrats as well as on a deference on the part of the population towards the state. Moreover, we argued that no modern state can be understood in terms of the logic of individuals seeking self-interest. This would in effect lead to the deinstitutionalization of the state. Furthermore, the analysis of modern markets and democracy also showed us the importance of institutions and a concomitant ethos. Modernity in itself thus underdetermines modern fields of activity and something else is required for them to function. What leads to a specific ‘equilibrium’ in an economy or state, is “a set of shared understandings about what other actors are likely to do, often rooted in a sense of what it is appropriate to do in such circumstances”. What the ‘Varieties of Capitalism’ approach that we looked at focuses on, is “informal rules and understandings” that lead to “common knowledge”.<sup>830</sup>

Seeking to reinterpret these concepts in terms of the human condition, they can be elucidated in terms of how we described the world of embedding in the previous chapter. The importance of institutions and ethos in modern life points towards the way of relating that we called attunement in contrast with the way of relating of detachment that pertains to Technopolis. A central element of attunement was that it required local involvement. The farmer deals not with plants in general, but with *these* plants. Similarly, here the “shared understandings” refer to what is appropriate in *these* kind of circumstances. Whereas universal capitalism develops and spreads courses of action that are suitable anywhere, the idea of varieties of capitalism point towards actions that gain their meaning in a specific context and which make less sense outside of these contexts. Furthermore, institutions and ethos have to do with tacit knowledge. People act not as detached subjects who have their preferences and courses of action transparently before them (as rational-choice theory would claim), but courses of action and preferences emerge in the course of interactions that have installed in people a certain directedness which they have incorporated or embodied. These come to be ingrained in their hands, movements, mental habits and types of reactions to others and which need not be explicit to them. These patterns thus belong to a meaningful order that people have become attuned to and from which they can identify what is appropriate and what not. This order places actions, objects and people in patterns that make them refer to each other, instead of in the empty space of neutral objects that comes with modernity. In other words, we see the elements of embedding. Within these modern structures, people do not operate as subjects against a neutral world, but are attuned to a meaningful order. The detaching forces of Technopolis are made homely and are this way transformed.

These patterns emerge partly through explicit education (what Oswald Spengler speaks of as *Bildung*), but mostly through the unconscious appropriation of manners and habits (for Spengler *Züchtung*).<sup>831</sup> The practice that leads to this unconscious appropriation creates the

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<sup>830</sup> P. Hall, D. Soskice, *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 13

<sup>831</sup> “Zur Bildung gehören Bücher, zur Zucht gehört der stetige Takt und Einklang der Umgebung, in die man sich hineinfühlt, hineinlebt”, O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*, München: C.H. Beck, 1923, p. 966 (original italics)

sense of tact and consonance that we distinguished as constitutive of embedding. Through these concepts we can phenomenologically shed light on what it is to learn ‘the way of the bureaucrat’ (*kanryodo*) in Japan or the Confucian responsibility of officials in China. The tact and consonance deriving from unconscious appropriation can be understood as what Spengler describes as *Sitte* (habits, customs) which he contrasts with *Moral* (morality). Morality comes through conscious effort and deals with good and evil. By contrast *Sitte*, which is inherent in all economic activity, is a self-evidential feeling of good and bad. Whoever is not good, lacks honor, is ordinary, or an outsider, but not evil, which belongs to the domain of morality. Going against the customs of a group is experienced as uncultured or mean, whereas going against morality is a sin. *Sitte* concerns not a view or reasoning, but a tactful feeling of what is good and what not. It concerns virtues like loyalty, bravery, chivalry, camaraderie as well as the ethical value of diligence, discipline and labor.<sup>832</sup> Phenomenologically, we can interpret the importance of ethos as the Spenglerian *Sitte*, which denotes the unconsciously but immediately felt tact of being embedded.

Something else that we discerned in the first chapters was that some societies are more family-centred whereas others are more characterized by cooperation between non-related people. The ‘radius of trust’ that is different in these types of societies points in phenomenological terms towards different senses of tact and consonance. In all of them there are ingrained habits that instinctively find their way into forms of social order. These in turn give the economic world a particular shape. In one case it can lead to large overseas networks based on kinship, whereas in another it can spawn tightly knit industrial conglomerates based on professional ties. Although democracy is based on the choice and consent of free individual subjects, everywhere it is also underpinned and given shape by a *local sense of tact*. Its vibrancy in Northern Italy is based on the shared understandings that have developed over centuries of cooperation in the diverse organizations of civil society. In India, democracy is underpinned by a tradition of heterodoxy and the argumentative way of dealing with it. This particular sense of consonance is expressed in the typical Indian trait of rolling the head when one understands the other or when one gives ascent to something.

Next, in chapter III we saw that we could connect the localized institutions and ethos to general patterns that exist across societal spheres, one of which was our concept of the character. One aspect of the character was its reference to the world of drama, as a stock-character with its specific set of mannerisms and responses that the audience immediately recognizes. In terms of embedding, we can say that the character is a mould or form in which life is cast. Instinctively sensing this form, we can also immediately grasp a certain directedness in life. The character that we encounter in another person or that we manifest ourselves goes together with a meaningful order that leads our actions and thoughts into a certain familiar direction. In the mould of the character, life can be-in-form. Moreover, a

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<sup>832</sup> Idem, p. 1150. With this opposition of values in good and evil and good and bad, he amends Nietzsche’s theory of slave and lord morality. See *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, 1. Abschnitt. F. Nietzsche, ‘Zur Genealogie der Moral: Eine Streitschrift’ (1887), 1. Abschnitt, from: *Friedrich Nietzsche: Sämtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bänden*, München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag 1999 (1967), pp. 245-412

character that pertains to a certain society lays a kind of claim on us. This is related to the other aspect of the concept, namely its connection to morality and norms. The character is the embodiment of such features of society. A religious character or a national hero can be the directly felt manifestation of a more abstract idea like love or justice. The meaningful order in which people thus dwell in a society can thus be embodied and given form through such characters as excellent exemplars, but also as temptations that are to be avoided. And in our discussion of embeddedness, we saw how in fields like sports or craftsmanship the unconscious grasping of a certain form is a powerful way of learning or reaching excellence.<sup>833</sup> And linking it to another element of the world of embedding, it is important to note that the character has to be understood as spherical. It is not a clearly defined object, but more of an energy that people circle around. It is thus also not manifested as a transparent object, but more as a manner of doing things, that shines through at particular occasions and which this way weaves a pattern of meaning. For foreigners, a character might be considered as a singular clear object, a stereotype. But the character that we have identified as a shaping influence in economy, state, education and thought is of a different nature. Like in explaining to others what “home” is, we can only do this by giving instances of its appearance, relate to mannerisms that are typically encountered, and hope the other will at some point grasp the meaning. Furthermore, the spherical character of space meant that it is not neutral, but filled with patterns of direction. A living character emanates a magnetism that attracts people, drives them to circle around it, emulate it and dwell in its form. For Spengler, the world of morality is connected with the taboo. It deals with eternal rules of do’s and don’ts. *Sitte*, with which we are dealing here however, is according to him totemic.<sup>834</sup> It is an powerful energy that also energizes people and draws them into its orbit. It is a focal point under the banner of which talent is fostered and brought to great heights. Viewed externally and without the formative ideal, an English boarding school or a French lycée appear like places of terribly oppressive discipline. But it is this formative energy that shapes characters, embeds people in a steady form, that not only makes this discipline tolerable, but even can make it enjoyable, because the cultural ideal is experienced as a path worth following. In schools as well as economic or political arenas people learn the explicit rules they have to follow, but our view on the tactile dimension of life shows us that it is by circling around a cultural ideal in the contact with colleagues, teachers, places and ceremonies, that a steady disposition of mind and body is created and a mould is cast from which people can be in form. A foreigner too feels the formative power of this local sense of tact when walking through the colleges of

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<sup>833</sup> W. T. Gallwey, whose theory of the inner game we discussed actually gives an interesting example of how this is related to following a character. He found that a good way of learning something to someone, like the game of tennis, is not by telling the person that he or she is good at it, nor by admonishing them to do better. By asking a student to not focus on the outcome of the swings at all, but only by pretending to be a professional player (with a camera pointed at them, but not at where the ball landed) actually made the student perform much better. Trying to attune to and ‘feel in’ an exemplar lifts up the student and brings the student in-form. W. T. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance*, New York: Random House, 2008 (1974), p. 47

<sup>834</sup> O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, p. 981

Oxbridge or a Japanese work floor. The less formal and explicit it is, the more powerful it can be.

This spherical force gives vitality or soul, or what Ad Verbrugge has called *bezieling*. He describes this totemic force by way of Wolfram van Aschenbach's *Parsifal*. Living in retreat in the forest with his mother, the young Parsifal one day sees a group of knights in their uniforms pass by. Although not knowing what it all signifies, the stature, the horses and the ornaments strike deep into his soul and enflame it. The knights are totemic, or iconic, in the sense that they radiate something which draws the young man towards them.<sup>835</sup>

Thus we can see how our concept of the character is an element of the process of transformation or embedding Technopolis. Within the neutralized world of Technopolis, it is a force that refers to a meaningful order and direction. Whereas the modern market place empties space and time, along these lines, time and space are filled with totemic powers with their own directionality. Whereas Technopolis turns everything into transparent objects, we see here the process of circling through which we not just remain at the surface of things, but move into the depths of a world. Through such channels, the structures of Technopolis are fused with the world of embedding and turned into a place where people can dwell in.

The totemic and spherical element of a living character thus serves to bring life into a meaningful pattern and this way give it form. This dynamic can also be witnessed throughout modern life and the force that emanates from the mass media. Musical artists, movie stars and athletes draw people into their orbit. As such, they can mobilize energy and bring out the greatest talents in people. This way the detachment that comes with modern media, creating the mobile personality that looks at everything from the outside, can be embedded and thus turned into a space in which people can dwell. It can energize people internally and drive them to a course of action. What is more common however, is that this remains within the sphere of detachment of Technopolis. Often, these role models only are a desired object that is enjoyed passively, without putting people on a path of action that gives their life shape.<sup>836</sup> The focal points of mass media thus can have a totemic character to them, but they do not set out an inner path which as we have seen in our investigation of embeddedness, goes together with rites of passage. Whenever there is a strong living character at play in life, like those mentioned above, this still goes together with elaborate ceremonies, stages that novices go through and rituals of initiation. A powerful sense of tact can manifest itself in examinations, specific clothing that pertains to a rank, codes that are unclear for outsiders and insignias that

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<sup>835</sup> A. M. Verbrugge, 'De vorming van cultuur en de dynamiek van de tijd: Globalisering, onderwijs en de lokale opgaven van hoge cultuur' in: P. van Bortel (red.) *Wat heet beschaving?: Scrutons onderwijs- en cultuurkritiek*, Kampen: Uitgeverij Klement, 2011. This totemic character of life described by Oswald Spengler and Ad Verbrugge points towards a dimension of life that requires further future investigation. We have described it in the previous chapter in terms of energetic forms and the spherical nature of space. We cannot delve into it more here, but these elements constitute a neglected feature of philosophical anthropology.

<sup>836</sup> See also idem.

mark distinctions.<sup>837</sup> Through such features, forms of authority are established. Indeed, the meaningful directedness goes together with a type of verticality. This goes against the tendency of Technopolis to make relations horizontal. From a technopolitical perspective, the vertical character of embedding can appear as a display of external force. What is important to note however, is that it has an inner appeal and this way can establish legitimate authority.

Through such customs, the detached subject that stands against a neutral world is dissolved and instead is woven into a meaningful order in which he or she is embedded. No longer a chaos of stimuli from which freely can be chosen, the order is incorporated through attunement in a personal journey. This makes it possible in Anthony Giddens' words "to keep a particular narrative going"<sup>838</sup>, through which the person is embedded.

The concept of character also illuminates the way transformation happens in the cases we looked at in chapter III. The characters we discerned could possibly have their origins in fields like sea-faring or piracy, the conquest of the frontier, knightly orders or collectively building dams. Now these activities themselves are no longer constitutive of the modern societies we looked at. Their initial experiences and ways of dealing with them have disappeared in the course of modernization. However, from these activities, cultures developed an inward stance, in this case a character. When the outward context disappears, this inward dimension can persist. Moreover, it can be projected onto a new context. A particular sense of tact then comes to inhabit and shape modernity. The Lutheran spirit of service can be transposed to the economic field where it creates cooperative capitalism. The spirit of the conquest of the frontier, when it is injected in modern universities and businesses transforms into the project of putting a man on the moon. The elitist and centralizing spirit of the Catholic Church can preach dirigiste economics in the embodiment of the highly educated bureaucrat. This way, the traditional embedding is transformed as the manifestation of the character is different from in the past. But modernity is also transformed, by being shaped and given form by the world of embedding. It is appropriated by a form of embedding, through which it loses its inherent and absolutist tendency to detach individuals from their surroundings.

We have seen how modernity is embedded locally through institutions and the ethos that inhabits them. With the discussion of the character we have seen this dynamic in society at large. From this broad perspective we can see the general nature of the response we are looking at here.

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<sup>837</sup> In the world of the popular media, certain subgroups or scenes can exhibit these features, this way embedding individuals. Often however, their character is quite fluid and their institutionalization low. Most of the icons or totems of the popular media draw people towards them, but do not constitute a form of stable directedness in the lives of their followers.

<sup>838</sup> A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 54

The basic experience is that of Technopolis challenging one's traditional way of life. In denial, it is clung on to, but it no longer has the capacity to shape a world and thus energize people. Identification and conquest both are driven by modernity's energy, but lack form. What we have described of the element of the character follows the response of transformation. The traditional embedding is disconnected from its traditional context, its spirit is interpreted more generally, from which it can be projected on to modernity, shaping it in the process. The spirit of embedding is poured out on to the modern world. Modernity has a great force, determining what activity makes sense and what does not, and its magical power is seductive. But rather than being burnt up in its fire, embedding gives it shape: subjectivity is rooted and ordered into paths of living, the environment is made familiar and people tacitly know each other in the depths of an unconscious common understanding. Whereas the institution represents a local *habitat*, the 'structural resemblance' generalizes this experience. Throughout society, it projects familiar circumstances and context. And whereas the ethos represents a local *habitus* (that of the entrepreneur, the official or the teacher for instance), the concept of style generalizes this. It spreads a common way of doing things, of responding and interacting that familiarizes Technopolis and turns it into a home.

In traditional pre-modern societies, we can discern how the cultural modes of behavior are paralleled by an experience of the world. As Clifford Geertz notes, the Navaho ethic of calm deliberation, persistence and caution is linked to a concept of nature that is powerful, 'mechanically' regular and very dangerous. The transcendent moral determinism of Hinduism is answered and complemented by a strong ritualistic and duty-bound ethic.<sup>839</sup> Now the dynamic of Technopolis is to sever this link, rendering the world meaningless and the subject detached. With our concepts we can see how, this dynamic notwithstanding, culture can still turn the world into a home-like dwelling. We saw in France for instance, a world view that is rationalist, in which first principles can be deduced and universal rules apply. This view of the world is embodied and answered in the disposition towards legalism, bureaucratic rule and the dirigiste style. By contrast, in England we saw an orientation towards empiricism and a trust in natural development that is met with an ethic of laissez-faire, decentralization and local practices. The powerful inner feeling of a culture thus bursts out and shapes a world according to its inclinations and principles. In the response of transformation, this is done in the context of the modern world. Very plastically, we have seen this in the shape it also gives to architecture and in creating an environment through gardening. These most clear manifestations point us towards the plethora of phenomena in different spheres that correspond to them and from these phenomena we can be pointed towards the culturally felt directedness in a society. The correspondence creates a kind of "pre-established harmony", to borrow a term from the philosopher Leibniz.

When an embedding powerfully puts its stamp of the diverse fields of modern life, we can say that the empty space of Technopolis is transformed into what with Peter Sloterdijk we have called animated space (*beseelte Raum*). Against the detachment that modernity spreads

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<sup>839</sup> C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (2000 Edition), New York: Basic Books, 2000 (1973), p. 130

‘between faces’ in subways, skyscrapers and other anonymous crowds, a sense of *Einklang* is also injected between them. The expressions, modes of response and ways of presenting oneself are familiar and nods and gestures lead to common understanding. A local sense of humor or expressing dissatisfaction, but also for instance the often-noted English disposition for queuing orderly, expresses a tact of what is the apt way of responding to circumstances.

When people complain of a sense of insecurity in the streets, researchers often point to objective statistics about crime to dispel this concern. What is at stake here however, is not a neutral space with the dots of statistics. The concern is about a bastardization of public space in which the *beseelte Raum* and its familiarity disappears. The space between them has become less homely.

When the space of a society is inhabited by a strong sense of embedding, we can say that a society is ‘in form’.<sup>840</sup> Like the sports team that has internalized the forms of the game, people anticipate each other and small movements suggest whole patterns of action, these elements are present in societies that have embedded Technopolis.

When Technopolis impinges on a traditional embedding, it creates confusion, despair and a general loss of direction. It creates a situation characterized by what Spengler has called *Spannung* (‘tension’). Outside forces are experienced as infringements, the self notes its difference from others and people’s composites are tense. From the searching and experimenting on the inner middle ground, a course of transformation can emerge and we can characterize this happening as an ‘ignition’. The heaped-up tension and the restless energy that constantly clashed and dove out, suddenly finds an outlet and a path to follow. We call this an ignition to highlight the tremendous energy that is released, which can be felt throughout a society where this is happening. It is something that can currently be felt if one goes to the busy streets of India’s big cities. The air is filled with energy and any outsider is gripped with the feeling that constantly ‘something is going on’. A society at large here is embarking on the path of embedding modernity. In Spenglerian terms, the *Spannung* is replaced by an outburst of *Takt*. Whereas tension in a society can also be felt as an oppressive atmosphere, tact is experienced as a clearing of the sky. The atmosphere no longer weighs heavy on the shoulders and lifts down, but raises people up to look at the horizon. As the powers of Technopolis meet the forces of embedding and as they blend and ignite, a process of mutual fertilization ensued. A way of life that was deprived of its context and was felt to be dying suddenly finds a new outlet and is filled with vital energy. On the other hand, what was felt as powerful and seductive, but cold and shapeless, becomes a place that people can dwell in. The impact of Technopolis on the human condition is watered down in this blending with embedding. From its inherent tendency it spreads detachment, but through transformation this tendency is balanced.

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<sup>840</sup> Next to a “society in form”, Spengler also speaks of a society “in Verfassung” (constitution). Just like in English, the German word refers both to a state of being as well as a written document. Spengler makes it clear that a society’s constitution does not reside in written texts, but in the informal, implicit ways of acting. O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, p. 1005

Of course, the process of the modernization of a society and the rise of modern markets is also intertwined with the desire to acquire riches. It is the unleashing of this desire, and the natural market mechanism that results from it, that for economists stands at the root of so-called 'emerging markets'. This view first of all misses the magical feeling that accompanies the modern quest for riches and hence its unsettling nature. This is why economists are often taken by surprise by political decay, institutional collapse and revolution even when economic growth is strong. This view also blinds us to see the tremendous spiritual reawakening that is taking place and the way energy is channeled into a homely atmosphere by a local sense of tact. A sense has emerged of a path worth taking which generates the capacity to deal with the enormous changes that are taking place in society. When modernity is embedded, a confidence in the present emerges that projects itself into the future. Movement and change are no longer felt as infringements that cause tension, but are now experienced as the set of challenges through which people can manifest their drive and shape their longing. This experience of a society that is cast into form can be compared with the way this happens on a micro-level in sports. The hard process of learning the skills causes tension and the spirit yearns for rest. But when one gets 'into the zone', this experience gives way to another. As Gallwey describes of the surfer (referring here to its literal meaning, not the metaphor we derived from Barrico before):

The surfer waits for the big wave because he values the challenge it presents. He values the obstacles the wave puts between him and his goal of riding the wave to the beach. Why? Because it is those very obstacles, the size and coming power of the wave, which draw from the surfer his greatest effort. It is only against the big waves that he is required to use all his skill, all his courage and concentration to overcome; only then can he realize the true limits of his capacities.<sup>841</sup>

This is the experience that we sense in the air of societies that are cast into form. It also goes contrary to what Dalrymple described as the "hydraulic view of the soul", which we saw emerge in Technopolis. That was the view prevalent in the everyday experiences the psychiatrist reports from, but also in work of the psychologist Sigmund Freud and the sociologist Norbert Elias. The internal life of human beings is seen here as a bundling of impulses that meet external forces that discipline it. There is only so much external 'pressure' that the soul can take and exceeding it will lead to violent outbursts or internal decrepitude. Based on strands in the work of Nietzsche, the philosopher Michel Foucault came with a similar view in his theory of disciplining. In our discussion here we come to a different conceptualization of the soul. At the root of this hydraulic idea, stands the technopolitical subject that is detached from his environment. With our concept of embedding, we can see a much more internally attuned relationship of the individual to its environment. When there is no form, but simply the chaos of stimuli, this leads to tension, stress and repression. But getting in form internally ignites people, and obstacles and further struggle become desirable,

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<sup>841</sup> W.T. Gallwey, *The Inner Game of Tennis*, p. 120



rather than just more pressure and frustration. Only from such a view can we understand the magnetic power of form ideals as well as the ease of movement of those who are ‘in form’. The professional athlete, the great musician, the capable politician and the well-oiled company have a lightness and naturalness to their movement that cannot be understood without a concept of an inner disposition and drive towards form that transforms tension and discipline.

We come here to another way in which we can show the difference between the stance of transformation and that of conquest. In conquest, the external force was virulently fought. In this process, we saw that tradition is mobilized, objectified and this way deformed. In other words, conquest actually has the same effect as Technopolis, the force it seeks to overcome. We had explained this through the prior bastardization that stands at the root of the stance of conquest. However, when a stance departs from a living form of embedding, this goes together with a confidence with which challenges can be met. The acknowledgment can be made that certain things simply have changed or vanished and this strain can be tolerated. More specifically, a confident embedding follows what we have called the *Tao* and this went together with an attitude of *letting*. As the external force we described is overwhelming, fighting it will surely lead to defeat. But it is by letting it that one’s own patterns can emerge around it and shape it. A transformation of embedding requires being ‘like water’, not hard so it can be crushed, but yielding so it can move everywhere freely. The confidence in one’s way of life that is necessary for this ability implies not being bastardized by the forces of modernity. We have now seen different ways in which this comes about. The broader societal embedding of modernity is rooted micro-level practices. A long process of practicing through which skills and crafts are developed initiate individuals to broader meaningful orders. An attunement to spherical and rhythmical patterns creates the sense of ‘being-in’ something. From these practices at the micro-level the tact is developed that on a macro-scale can unconsciously create a modern society in form. Family life is central to this development and we will return to it later.

### *Transforming Subjectivity*

If we want to discern what the process of embedding modernity amounts to, we need to look more closely at one aspect of it, namely subjectivity. We know that it is a constitutive aspect of Technopolis and we need to understand better how it is embedded. This is important because modern subjectivity is a force that places people outside of their embedding and we need to see how this is balanced or tamed.

We can see this diremptive force of subjectivity in the process that Eric Hobsbawm has called “the invention of tradition”.<sup>842</sup> In it, we see the technopolitical forces of subjectivity reorganizing and manipulating tradition. As the Italian nationalist Massimo d’Azeglio

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<sup>842</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition*

expressed: “We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians”.<sup>843</sup> One instrument of this invention we have already encountered. Throughout this chapter we have seen how modernity museumifies tradition, through which it is frozen and deformed. Now although we have seen how a technopolitical force emanates from the museum, we need to see it in the context of a broader process of transformation through which its nature is modified. Throughout the invention of tradition that went together with the process of nation-building, we also see a different relation to tradition emerge that created a modern type of embedding. The museum with its collection of objects was itself not a neutral object to be enjoyed. It was erected as an element in a new meaningful order where it referred to other elements in that order. For the citizen that was newly forged, the museum was part of a path that gave direction in life. Other elements of this path were the book and the library, the classical music performance and military conscription. Patterns of behavior were created that embedded the modern subject. Its free and detached nature was thus given a certain stability. So while Technopolis was a force that was neutralizing the world and the subject became the source of value, against this much of the world was also given a steady shape, but now inwardly. The modern citizen developed a culture of inwardness that countered the detachment that subjectivity brought with it. This inwardness is wonderfully explored by Alessandro Barrico.<sup>844</sup> From this stabilization of the powers of subjectivity, some of the great modern forms of embedding emerged. Detachment became something that could be dwelt in through the virtues of meritocracy and professionalism. The modern subject was anchored by the recognition of individual rights and integrity in a specific political community. These are themes we have only been able to touch on lightly in our study. What is our focus here is how modern subjectivity is balanced and stabilized through the forces of tradition. We saw how traditional features were projected in modern moulds. The characters that we distinguished in our study of five Western countries in chapter III are all adapted to modern conditions. Whereas the traditional English aristocrat based his claims on birth, the modern English gentleman earns his position through education and upbringing. The authoritarian Catholic elite of France turned into the technocratic elite of meritocratic educational institutions. The German spirit of service works in the form of a civil servant for the modern universal state and the stern burgher and the expansive individual have found their place in the liberal democratic order as they are ‘civilized’ from their previous incarnations.

Tradition is this way modernized and projected in the mould of subjectivity, but at the same time it balances and shapes subjectivity itself, by locking it in stable patterns of behavior. The life-time employment system of Japan has often been described as an ancient Japanese practice. Ian Buruma rightly emphasizes that it was forged by the prime minister Hayato Ikeda in the postwar period.<sup>845</sup> What is important for us here however, is to emphasize that

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<sup>843</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1990), p. 44

<sup>844</sup> A. Barrico, *De Barbaren*, pp. 120-135

<sup>845</sup> I. Buruma, *Inventing Japan*, p. 166

this invention corresponded to ancient virtues of loyalty and responsibility. As such, it gave shape and direction to the great changes that came with modernization. Thus modernity implies the rise of subjectivity, but in the process of transformation the force of subjectivity is made less absolute. Potentially completely detached subjectivity is shaped and directed in familiar patterns, balancing its diremptive effects.

What can be interpreted as modern invention is indeed often a transformation of tradition and also serves to embed Technopolis.<sup>846</sup> Many modern myths archaized new ways of behavior through which a light was lit onto the journey into the unknown. Thus while the Dutch were developing a new type of society based on the riches of burghers and without royal absolutism, they told themselves they were restoring ancient Batavian practices. The creative appropriation of the past made it possible to move further into the future with confidence. Furthermore, Michael Walzer has shown how many modern movements, from the English Glorious Revolution to the American Federalists to twentieth century civil rights movements, cast their struggle in terms of the Biblical exodus. From the house of bondage and the murmurings in the wilderness to the covenant and the promised land, it provided a story through which a new world could be made familiar.<sup>847</sup>

### *The Parental Order*

We have studied how modernization and its bastardizing effects can be countered in different ways through the response of transformation that starts from a stable embedding. We have spoken of embedding in the sense of the symbolic cultural order that defines the tradition of people. On a more direct level, this embedding derives from the parental order. Tradition persists through the transmission through the generations. Indeed, our concept of bastardization as a result of modernization derives from the relationship to this sphere. It is the family that is the most direct soil from which people grow. The possibilities of embedding Technopolis in the end have to be related to the embedding that comes from the parental order.

We have seen how Technopolis threatens this order. We can describe the basic experience and the possible responses in terms of relations to it. The response of denial holds on to the parents even though the world from which their way of life derives is no longer one's own. We encountered this with migrant families that seek to recreate the world of the homeland. Fearful of the loss of culture, many immigrants become more conservative towards their children than those who they left in their homeland. Seeing that that world no longer exists for their children, one act of desperation is sending their children back to the homeland at an older age. This happens especially with young women to shield them from the temptations of

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<sup>846</sup> This of course does not mean that the explicit manipulation of tradition to serve individual interests does not happen. Often it is a technopolitical tool.

<sup>847</sup> M. Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution*, New York: Basic Books, 1985

modernity. The comparative response with young men is to find a wife from the homeland and bring her to the West. This stance however denies that this traditional family order is no longer that of their children and as such freeze the children in the past and clouds their future. The response of identification with Technopolis seeks to turn away from the parental order as such. Subjectivity detaches from this order and people burn their bridges. Theodore Dalrymple has shown how this dynamic is rife in modern Western culture. The meals in families increasingly are fast-food. He describes how the table around which families dine together is disappearing in many households. Eaten alone or together in front of the television, meals have become “solitary, nasty, brutish and short”.<sup>848</sup> With the common meaningful structure neutralized, family life consists of subjects who fulfill their needs with objects at their disposal. We have also seen how the response of conquest claims to return to the parental order, but in effect leaps over the real parents into a fantasy of them. Radically withdrawing from the perceived weakness of their parents, the individuals in the end are also not embedded in a home.

As we have noted, the parental order in itself cannot provide guidance in the condition of modernity. The world of one’s parents is not one’s own. But in the response of transformation they remain an embedding. It is from the routines that we learn early on in life that the orderliness of everyday life in adulthood emerges.<sup>849</sup> These routines provide the meaningful order that the child learns the capacity of attunement from. The forces of subjectivity that modernity fosters are centrifugal. A strong embedding provides the inner capacities to counter this uprooting force of subjectivity. It creates a stable base, the capacity for concentration and to dwell in things often through strict rules. Theodore Dalrymple investigation at the bottom of society shows the importance of this in the social jungle he describes. For the poor, attendance at a church can be a way to “give meaning to the everyday vexations of existence and to overcome them”.<sup>850</sup> It is the same phenomenon that we find in the growth of religious practices among the poor of Latin America or Africa, where it creates the frames of mind and behavior that make it possible to flourish in the modern world. It are the lesser virtues like tidiness, cleanliness, admonishments by parents to present oneself respectable when one leaves the house that banish the melting into air that modernity brings. Especially mothers that almost compulsively guard these virtues impart the ingrained nexus or embedding that is general enough to still have a validity in different conditions. Yet at the same time, this application to new conditions requires that it is not imparted with rigidity. Instead of clinging on to the old conditions, in a strong embedding the element of ‘letting’ is of crucial importance. The parental order provides a confidence with which longing can be directed into new avenues. As Csikszentmihalyi notes, successful families combine the opposite traits of

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<sup>848</sup> T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom*, pp. 140-141 This is Thomas Hobbes’ famous depiction of life in the state of nature.

<sup>849</sup> See for instance, A. Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 52

<sup>850</sup> T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom*, p. 93

“discipline with spontaneity, rules with freedom, high expectations with unstinting love”<sup>851</sup>. The rules and discipline avoid the waste and scattering of energy in constant struggle and negotiation about what to do. This energy can then be directed towards the pursuit of one’s own path in life. In his terms, it prepares people to experience life as flow. The parental order this way does not rigidly determine the life of children, but imparts an inner disposition from which they can be let go to find their own way. And from the position of the youth, the parents remain a source of embedding, although the spirit of what they imparted has to be disconnected from the context in which it developed. It is this dynamic that we can see clearly in the context of immigrants. As Dalrymple notes, many Muslim immigrants are not so much neglectful of their children, in the way that this emerges in modernity, but they often are highly rigid and rejective of modern life. They fail to see what future there can be for their children in the disorientation of modern life and then lack the confidence to let them find their own way.<sup>852</sup> This is also the reason why when their children escape from an atmosphere they find suffocating, they often turn against the culture of their parents and identify radically with modernity. On the other hand, there are also notable examples of immigrant groups that often seem to do very good in foreign contexts. The Chinese and Jewish, possible through long experience as diasporas, often combine a strict discipline in imparting culture in their children with a highly adaptive capacity to new conditions.<sup>853</sup> In many countries, they are notable for being capable of maintaining a richness of, and attachment to their traditions while on the other hand fully embracing modern life. We see here a strong rootedness that has a certain confidence from which foreign elements can be absorbed. From another way we come to the paradoxical nature of transformation, where letting modernity in and not resisting it, is the most powerful way of preserving a traditional embedding. Or in the earlier quoted words of Il Gattopardo: “Everything must change to stay the same”. A powerful sense of tact can even openly make fun of its own upbringing and traditions without in the least losing confidence in them.

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<sup>851</sup> M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Finding Flow*, p. 88

<sup>852</sup> T. Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom*, pp. 27-29 and 122

<sup>853</sup> Several times now we have come across cases of diasporas. We have looked at them from the standpoint of a traditional embedding that is confronted with modernity. Another highly interesting issue that we cannot discuss here is the way in which diasporas deal with the blending of different types of embedding. Muslim immigrants to the West for instance, are not only faced with the blending with the modern world, but also with German, French or Dutch culture. This in turn creates other interesting hybrids, a theme that is pursued by authors like A. Appadurai and H. K. Bhabha. Places like Dubai, in which currently more Indians and Pakistanis live than Emirati, but also Singapore and Malaysia that have a complex ethnic composition are fascinating cases to study. The dynamics of a country like Israel that has an overarching Jewish culture, but which consists of a diverse range of returning diasporas with long histories in different parts of the world could also be seen in this light. This theme however reaches beyond the scope of our current investigation.

## **E). Looking over the Horizon**

Over the last few decades, we have witnessed an acceleration in the global unfolding of Technopolis to almost every corner of the earth. From the whole of this investigation it has become clear that this also brings with it the task of embedding Technopolis. Very briefly here, we want to venture into the future and look at the prospects for how this task could take shape.

There are two main grounds that make this venture plausible. The first is that we have seen that countries are strongly path-dependent. We know that tradition permeates modernity and thus pointing at powerful traditions can yield insight into the form that modernity will have. Secondly, in the course of our investigation we looked at different cases which give us points of comparison between societies. Having seen how the task has been taken up by other societies points us in certain directions if we see similar patterns in other societies. We thus noted the similarity between Japanese and German traditions, from which we could also see how their paths of modernization also showed many similarities.

On the other hand, we also have enough reason to be cautious and skeptical of looking into the future of embedding Technopolis. Although we have been able to discern continuity with tradition in modernity, the character of this continuity can only be discerned *post factum*. Indeed, we are not talking here of traditions that persist unchanged as a kind of folklore, but of traditions that are bonded with modernity and transformed into something new. These cannot be determined beforehand as they emerge from a spark that ignites in the inner middle ground. It is from the depths of a deeply felt tact, not from a form of theoretical reasoning that this results. Moreover, any such venture will be strongly colored by its time and the concerns of this time. Currently, we are driven to understand what it is in East Asian societies, specifically China, that bonds so well with modernity and creates a powerful new form. Early in the twentieth century, in Max Weber's time, we would have been more likely to ask what it is in these societies that hinders this process from coming about. Moreover, with all the turmoil in the Middle East and the emergence of radical Islam, our minds are currently led to ask what in Islam is so antithetical to modernization and the same holds for Africa. We need to take heed of these objections and try look beyond the coloring of our time, but no one can step over his own shadow. We can here only hint at what might happen if these countries are cast into form. On the basis of our investigation thus far, we can here present suggestions and point to features to look out for, but these are necessarily speculative.

## *Wandering along the Chinese Wall*

The resurgence of China has long been prophesied. It was Napoleon who said of the country “let China sleep, for when the dragon awakes, she will shake the world”. China has awoken and it is shaking the world.

China’s engagement with Technopolis, as we have seen, has been diverse and complex. Viewing itself as the Middle Kingdom, it has long rejected the idea of having to learn from others and the country could thus be characterized as asleep. It has however also developed all the other responses and if anything it is now suffering from an overdose of Technopolis. Both in its communist and capitalist manifestation, a radical embrace of modernity has characterized the country. On the other side of its tremendous economic feats stands a great insecurity over its identity coming from the technopolitical melting of all that is solid, which sets China apart from a country like India. This is strongly felt by the country’s leadership that is looking for new sources of legitimacy and for this is turning towards the country’s ancient culture. We have enough reason to distrust state ideology and we discussed a similar situation with regard to Singapore’s propagation of Asian Values in Chapter II. But apart from this conscious state initiative, there is undoubtedly a fusing of Confucianism with modernity taking place in the country. We noted several examples of this before. The extreme popularity of the television shows of the university professor Yu Dan in which she makes sense of everyday issues with reference to the Chinese classics shows a rediscovery of tradition from the world of modernity.<sup>854</sup>

What are powerful traditions that can embed modernity? What resources can we point at that can give the centrifugal force of subjectivity shape in China?

Throughout East Asia we have noted the venerable tradition of the state of which China is the originator. Although there have been periods of civil strife and decentralization, the two millennia long existence of a state structure in the vast land of China has globally no comparison. Many point to internal unrest and secessionist currents in China (George Friedman even predicts a split between the coast and the in-land region<sup>855</sup>) and periods of state weakness are possible, but they have to be seen in the light of this fact. Even the Russian state, which has a much more volatile history (with a pattern of emergence and collapse), reasserted itself after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Chinese state could not have such a history if it were based solely on violence and luck. It has over the centuries exerted a powerful force of incorporation, expanding the concept of the Han ethnicity far beyond its original borders and Sinicizing invaders from the north like the Manchu who took over the

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<sup>854</sup> D. A. Bell, *China’s New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008

<sup>855</sup> G. Friedman, *The Next Hundred Years: A Forecast for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, New York: Double Day, 2009, pp. 88-100

Chinese state. With carrots and sticks, local elites have been subsumed into the Chinese state expanding its reach from the imperial court all the way down to the farthest small towns. Its capacity and legitimacy rested on a powerful educational ideal of the *Confucian scholar-bureaucrat*, what in our terms could be described as a character of Chinese society. Initially linked to aristocratic families, it was in time transformed into an entirely meritocratic system with blind exams, tough ordeals, initiation ceremonies and an order of rank. The ideal humanized and legitimized rule and implanted officials with strong moral ideas of responsibility and restraint. It is made possible great detail in 'state sciences' of planning, organization and accurate historical research. As such, the Chinese state tradition is what we have called energetic. It developed as a focal point of longing (for the ambitious as well as the poor who wanted to escape their lot) and drew the county's talent into its orbit and brought them to greater heights. The comparison here comes to mind with the French state that has a similar tradition. When this form more fully finds its way into the modern world, we can expect the equivalent of the prestigious French elite schools. Just as in the case with scholastic theology in France, the emphasis in China will be turned from the Confucian classics to the technical subjects. From such schools, an East Asian dirigisme could take shape. Like in France also, the imperial bureaucracy was victorious over the feudal aristocracy. The French court nobility stands next to the Confucian bureaucrat-scholar in a similar self-restraint, fine manners and deep sensibility. It is in this sense that China also strongly differs from Japan. Whereas Japan too has a strong state tradition, this was forged on top of, and next to a feudal aristocracy. Like Germany, Japan's modern state has been part of a cooperative effort in concert with other parties. In China, we can expect a more dirigiste relationship. This means that if it is in form, the Chinese economy could be capable of prestigious state-directed projects in fields like infrastructure or energy.

Next to the state tradition, the Chinese family is a notable phenomenon. We have already discussed the way it permeates the Chinese economy and traditionally it has also been grafted on to the state, where leaders take on a paternal role and like a father they see it as their role to create harmony in the whole. It is this strong familism at the expense of a civil society that also harbors the threat of great inequality and nepotism for China. Here it differs again from Japan with a civic tradition deriving from its feudal past. Like in Italy, the family-focus can manifest itself in mafia-like organizations, the Chinese triads that today exert a great amount of power in Hong Kong for instance. Singapore and South Korea are examples of countries where this same cultural trait has been tempered, but the elite of both countries is also to great extent organized around families.

Another tradition that has to be noted is the work ethic. We have noted above how this is an important underpinning of the modern economy when we for instance discussed the German concept of *Arbeitsfreude*. Chinese culture too is characterized by a great work ethic. The Dutch advisor to the Singaporean government, Albert Winsemius, for instance noted that there is a strong resemblance between Confucianism and Calvinism.<sup>856</sup> The work ethic is

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<sup>856</sup> Lee Kuan Yew, *From Third World to First: The Singapore Story: 1965-2000*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, p. 61



something that can be traced back to rice cultivation<sup>857</sup>, but the above-mentioned educational ideal also plays a strong part in this. For Confucius, life is a process of continuous learning. It is this great emphasis on, and respect for learning, that we see from the grades of the children of Chinese immigrants. Coming from great poverty, the potential manifestation of this cultural trait in China is enormous. Having similar traditions, wealthy South Korea has one of the world's highest percentages in terms of tertiary education enrollment and its social indicators surpass those of countries with similar levels of wealth. As China develops and casts modernity into form the over a billion learning Chinese will shake the world. A policy initiative of Taiwan was to offer lucrative jobs to educated overseas Taiwanese and we can expect China to also turn on this engine of development.

The work ethic is linked to the strong practical efficacy of Chinese culture. From martial arts to Chinese medicine, and from the manipulation of luck to the diverse array of bodily practices, this tradition points towards a sense of tact that 'exercises' incessantly to improve itself. The philosopher Hegel, whose insights have in the course of this investigation often corresponded to the results of our empirical research, describes China as a culture of mind or intelligence (*Verstand*), but not of fantasy (*Phantasie*).<sup>858</sup>

Its centralization, order and rationalization impress the mind like an awe-inspiring edifice. Indeed, the great Chinese Wall sums up all and embodies all of the above-mentioned features. The philosopher Spengler spoke of Chinese civilization in terms of the "the wandering soul"<sup>859</sup>. The metaphor brings to mind an incessant activity, a penchant for learning, a capacity for adaptation and hard work. In a different context, we have referred to the Taoist idea of being like water, which reflects these characteristics. For Weber, one reason why China did not develop capitalism was that instead of changing the external world to one's needs (like the Protestants did), the Chinese changed themselves to fit circumstances. It could be that a transformed China will inject this tireless activity onto the modern plain, a spirit that in the doctrine of *wei wu wei*<sup>860</sup> sees action even in inaction.

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<sup>857</sup> M. Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success*, London: Penguin Books, 2008, p. 238

<sup>858</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, (Werke 12), Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1986, p. 207

<sup>859</sup> O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, p. 397

<sup>860</sup> A Taoist doctrine that can be reached at a high stage.

### *Confucian scholars at the opening of the 2008 Beijing Olympics*



### *Shiva Dreaming in Cyberspace*

Turning to India's embedding and the way its powerful traditions could be bonded to modernity, it is notable that in many senses India is the exact opposite of China. Whereas China's history has known a powerful centralizing state, India has been characterized by decentralizing forces. Max Weber described the Chinese religion and culture as the most worldly of all, whereas he described the Indian counterpart as the most world-denying. For Hegel, China is characterized by *Verstand*, but India by *Phantasie*. China is all prose, India is all poetry.

Whereas China's accurate historical dating goes back millennia, in India the last few centuries have already a mythical character to them. This lack of detail and exact reasoning goes together with the great imagination of Indian culture. Its religious stories defy all logic and are experienced as a tumbling into the supernatural. This experience of losing grip is highly meaningful as it is a core Hindu belief that the tangible world is but an illusion. Behind the veil of *maya* is the dissolution of all that we believe is substantial. In this sense, Indian culture has an affinity with the world of Technopolis and the transfer of a concept like 'avatar' from Indian mythology to modern ICT brings this to light.

In its religion, the world is described as a dream of the god Shiva or alternatively as being created out of his ecstatic dancing. We can thus see why both Hegel and Spengler spoke of India as the “dreaming soul”.<sup>861</sup>

This ephemeral character of structures in Indian culture challenges its capacity for modernization in several ways. In contrast with China, Indian society has been weakly organized in politics. Whereas Chinese rule had the greatest troubles, but managed to keep off colonization, the British in India played local rulers against each other through which they could eventually colonize the country. This lack of grand-scale organization can still be seen in the country’s economic modernization. The great size of the Indian state notwithstanding, it for a large part has functioned as slow-moving ritual. Weakness in infrastructure, literacy and healthcare set India’s modernization apart from China’s. The latter’s radical embrace of modernity might be seen as a typical ‘traditional’ Chinese response to be contrasted with a typical Indian’s bottom-up development. On a micro-level, this aptitude for imagination rather than practical efficacy has also often been noted. In organizations or small groups, Indians are famous for developing great ideas, but not for being able to work together and bring them into practice.<sup>862</sup> These shortcomings however, should not blind us to the possibility of an Indian organization of Technopolis. It might be that these shortcomings are acknowledged and met with certain strategies or these features of Indian tact might transform into something that can make up for these weaknesses. We can envision that along several lines.

We have already noted how the Indian tradition of inwardness and a less rigid fixation on the material world has gone together with a skeptical culture and a toleration of heterodoxy that underpins the country’s democratic system. The great ideas and non-interference of Indians has created what Sen calls “the argumentative Indian” and manages to create an inclusive and diverse polity.

Moreover, just as we compared Japan to Germany and China to France, India can be compared with Anglo-Saxon countries like England or the United States. These two countries are also characterized by a high level of decentralization, a weak political centre, higher inequality and diversity. Just like England, India has a strong class awareness and knows an aristocratic tradition of aloofness. Both England and the United States, as we described in chapter III are weaker in such public goods as infrastructure and general education just like India. Through other strengths, these countries have managed to counter this weakness. Whereas the state is weaker, the private sector and civil society are all the more virulent. It has to be remembered that far into the twentieth century, European powers believed the United States to be childlike or no factor in international relations because of its weaker developed political sense and individualistic society. The French and the Germans looked down upon the English “shopkeeper” mentality (Napoleon). It has to be noted that in

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<sup>861</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen, über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, pp. 174-208; O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, pp. 15 and 174

<sup>862</sup> Mahbubani/ Sennett, A. Sen, *The argumentative Indian*, pp. 3-33

modernity, when a decentralized commercial power battled a centralized regime for preeminence, the United Provinces against Spain, England against France and the United States and Germany and the Soviet Union, the former emerged victoriously. In this sense, India's weakness may turn out to be a great strength. As it rises together with China, it always comes out bad in the comparison, but the more decentralized and commercial character of its development may in the end be an important strength. What is typical about India's current economic development is not grand state projects, but a wealth of creative private enterprise. This is found in ICT and other high-tech industries as well as in the fierce competitive spirit in more classical industry. In rapidly growing Bollywood, the Indian dream-like experience of existence, as musically accompanied falling in love, is creatively commercialized. In its broad popularity worldwide we can glimpse India's potential soft power.

Like China, Indian culture strongly emphasizes learning and education. As immigrants, they have also been a successful group, both in the West as well with its diaspora in Eastern and Southern Africa. The emphasis on learning for children shows in Freudian terms, a strongly developed super-ego. This emphasis can be found in Indian culture in the way it places the Brahmanic studying caste above the warriors and even the ruler. The caste system is something that will have to fade as India modernizes, but its deep roots have created a sense of tact with a certain directedness.

With the Brahmins highest on the social ladder a certain cultural ideal has been shaped. Like in China, certain practices have been energetic forces, drawing longing and talent towards it to great heights. But whereas in China this moved in the direction of great practical efficacy, in India this was actually dissolved and directed at pure inner spiritual development. Although traditional India also developed martial arts and medicine, its more focal yogis and fakirs have developed an incredible capacity to stand motionless in the face of tremendous duress and pain. It could be argued that the more practical sciences of physics and chemistry were embraced by the Japanese and Chinese as it fit with their orientation towards action and control. As Gurcharan Das notes, Indians have a greater leaning towards mathematics and more pure reasoning.<sup>863</sup> It is the Brahmanic disdain for using one's hands and the love of abstract reasoning that is connected with India's strength in the field of IT. The Brahmanic sense of tact is projected into a modern context. We can thus imagine a transformation in which the caste system and its external relations fades, while its inner directedness and talents, in abstract reasoning as well as in trading or even crafts, shape the modern world. The contemplative individual could shape Indian modernity as a character.

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<sup>863</sup> G. Das, *India Unbound: The Social and Economic Revolution from Independence to the Global Information Age*, New York: Anchor Books, 2002 (2000), p. 10

## *Turning the Fire in Islam into A Light*

For many contemporary observers modernization in the world of Islam looks like an unlikely prospect. One country that is actually ruled by an Islamic clergy, Iran, is a society that is deeply at odds with itself. Rather than being in form, it breathes out an atmosphere of tenseness and fear of the future. Drawing on Samuel Huntington's idea of "Islam's bloody borders"<sup>864</sup>, many commentators see a structural problem throughout the world of Islamic culture.

In contrast with China or India, it is harder to point at a process of transformation in this culture. We have noted cases of denial, identification and conquest in the Islamic world. Especially the latter, in the form of radical Islam shows for many that Islam is antithetical to modernization. Our investigation of the response of conquest shows that this is a problematic claim. For all its reference to tradition, we have shown how this response actually implies a bastardization rather than a firm embedding in tradition.

Our time and its issues direct us to look for deformation and its causes rather than an Islamic embedding of Technopolis. Here we need to broaden our view to find out what this could look like. Radical Islam itself is a factor in this. As we have shown, against its own objectives, it actually is a force of modernization. Not only has it modernized certain traditions, it has two additional effects in this direction. First of all, it fights and undermines the social context in which the response of denial was made possible. This concerns the shaking up of rural societies, but also those regimes in the Middle East that seek to keep Technopolis out by selling it oil. Secondly, it is a large-scale experimentation with traditional forms and although it itself represents a deformation, it has stirred a ground from which more vital impulses can emerge.

Critics of Islam point towards its tribalism, at least in the Middle East, as well as its warrior spirit that dispose it towards violence. We will take up the issue of tribalism in the next section, but we have already seen that a warrior culture in itself does not preclude modernization. We have noted it in the case of Japan and this might have been a reason why it too developed a response of conquest, but as the case shows this spirit can also be injected into modern life.

Just as China's current development blinds us to challenges that have been earlier formulated, it is incisive to look at views of Islam that were not marked by the rise of radical Islam. Ernest Gellner for instance earlier noted several features in Islam that make it highly compatible with modernity.<sup>865</sup> He for instance points at the lack of magic, or what Weber called the

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<sup>864</sup> S. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: And the Remaking of World Order*, London: The Free Press, 2002 (1997), pp. 254 - 265

<sup>865</sup> Discussed in: A. Filali-Ansary, 'Muslims and Democracy', in: L. Diamond, M.F. Plattner (eds), *The Global Divergence of Democracies*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001, p. 40

disenchantment of the world, that also characterizes Islam. Furthermore, Islamic culture is universalistic and legalistic. Moreover, it has an egalitarian spirit (which is one of the reasons why it spread so strongly in India) and a strong work ethic. Next to this, Islam is also not averse to commerce, although it does have ethical restrictions on profit-seeking. In the cases of Continental Europe, we have seen how such a culture might actually develop an egalitarian modern economy. With all these characteristics, it could be argued that Islam to a certain extent resembles Protestantism and has some of the virtues that according to Weber were conducive of capitalism. To draw an analogy, radical Islam is comparable to Calvinist Geneva, which developed a very strict religion, but in its critique of the established institutionalized church and its inward focus made a form of subjectivity possible, this way opening the door to engagement with modernity. These comparisons with Protestantism serve here as a counterweight to the often-voiced pessimism on modernization in the Islamic world. The differences in terms of its specific social relations, work ethic and other virtues will of course create a distinctive path of modernization.

Radical Islam is one side of the process of the Islamic masses entering the modern arena, a consequence of the demographic modernization that has already taken place in the Islamic world. The other side became manifest in the mass uprisings throughout the Middle East and North Africa at the start of 2011. For this modernization to come into form, it requires institutions to direct the cultural embedding into new directions. As Olivier Roy notes, next to the path he calls neofundamentalism, many Islamist groups have already moved into the direction of political normalization. They have been organized around national arenas to compete there as political parties. From Algeria and Tunisia to Turkey and Egypt, they are increasingly incorporated into broader political platforms.<sup>866</sup> Although for some of these groups, attachment to democratic party-politics may only be a strategy, instrumental in the struggle against authoritarian secularists, it is only by this experimentation that the channels can be created through which Islamism can bond with modernity in an enduring way. Islamic reformers problematically assert that Islam has always been democratic through its tradition of *shura* (“consultation”). However, our analysis does show how this could be an element from which the regime of modern democracy can be bonded with and shaped by traditional culture.

Moreover, the argument that Islam and modernity are incompatible usually only makes reference to the Middle East. Although it is the culture’s land of birth, it is important to note that most of the world’s Muslims do not live in the Middle East.<sup>867</sup> The largest Islamic

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<sup>866</sup> O. Roy, *Globalized Islam*, pp. 72-78

<sup>867</sup> We have discussed the problematic process of modernization in the wealthy Gulf states of the Middle East under the response of denial. There is a perspective however, from which we can also discern a response of transformation in these regimes. We spoke of denial in the sense that a traditional way of life was being maintained while its traditional basis had been undermined and has become technopolitical (selling oil and gas). However, one could alternatively argue that this does represent more continuity with a traditional way of life that has been transformed. Tribal rulers on the Arab peninsula had in the past conquered other populations and lived of the rents of their conquest. The modern rentier mindset of these regimes thus has a more traditional basis. From war booty, the rents have shifted to natural resource wealth and in the case of Dubai to owning property.

country in the world, Indonesia, has quite successfully been able to blend Islam with modernity and does no worse than its neighbors. Moreover, Malaysia is even more advanced in this field and has an income per head that is about twice the size of Thailand, its Buddhist neighbor. By adhering to the concept of Asian Values, former president Mahathir Mohammed placed Malaysia in the league of East Asian nations rather than together with the Middle East, claiming that the country's culture can vitally blend with modernity.

Another important case in this respect is Turkey. In the wake of the First World War, Kemal "Ataturk" remodeled the country in a response of identification with Technopolis. He was very restrictive on Islam, barring it from public space, changing the alphabet from Arab to Latin did away with sultan and caliph. Its modernizing elite has been at odds with a more conservative populace ever since. Whenever elections brought Islamists parties to power, the military would step in and depose them. With the election victory of the AKP in 2002 however, the two sides seem to coming closer together. An Islamist party, the AKP promotes modern liberal economics, democracy and integration with Europe. Whereas for eight decades, Technopolis was an externally imposed superstructure on top of the traditional embedding, this tradition is now feeling at home in modernity, shaping it into its own direction. Notable in this respect is the organization MÜSIAD, a Turkish business and industrialists organization. In contrast with the secularist Istanbul-based TUSIAD, this organization has an Islamic basis. It propagates an Islamic work ethic along Weberian lines. Another current is the rise of so-called Neo-Ottomanism in Turkey. To a great extent, this concerns more the ambition of a widely powerful empire, but it is important to note that it involves a re-appropriation of a past that was until recently publicly scorned.

Pakistan is a country that has a thoroughly problematic relationship with modernity. Ever since its creation in 1947, it has struggled how to relate its Islamic character to the modern state. From the secularist vision of its founder Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the already mentioned Abul Ala Maududi has sought to define it in radical Islamist terms. It is unclear what direction will take, especially in the context of its tremendous population growth, but here we have to note an alternative position, formulated by the poet Mohammed Iqbal. Writing in Urdu, Persian as well as Arabic, he had a great interest in Western thought and through Goethe and Rumi among others, he sought to set up a dialogue between East and West. Strongly inspired also by the mystic Sufi tradition, his work breathes a confident and affirmative atmosphere. In one of his poems, man is in dialogue with God. Radicals would assent to God's position in claiming that man has spoiled the earth by cutting it up into pieces and filling it with violence:

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On the other hand, in its traditional form, this was associated with virtues like courage, adventurism and grandeur, of which it has become unclear how they can flourish in the modern context. We can still see these virtues in the daring imaginative projects of the rulers in the Gulf states. At the same time, this contrasts with the idleness of much of the wider population, of which the visionary rulers have complained. C.M. Davidson, *Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success*, London: Hurst & Company, 2008, p. 179

## GOD

I made the whole world with the same water and clay,  
But you created Iran, Tartary and Ethiopia.  
From the earth I brought forth pure iron,  
But you made from that iron sword, arrow, and gun.  
You made an axe for the tree in the garden,  
And a cage for the songbird

But Iqbal also lets man respond. From a confident and affirmative stance, man has also made the world into a home:

## MAN

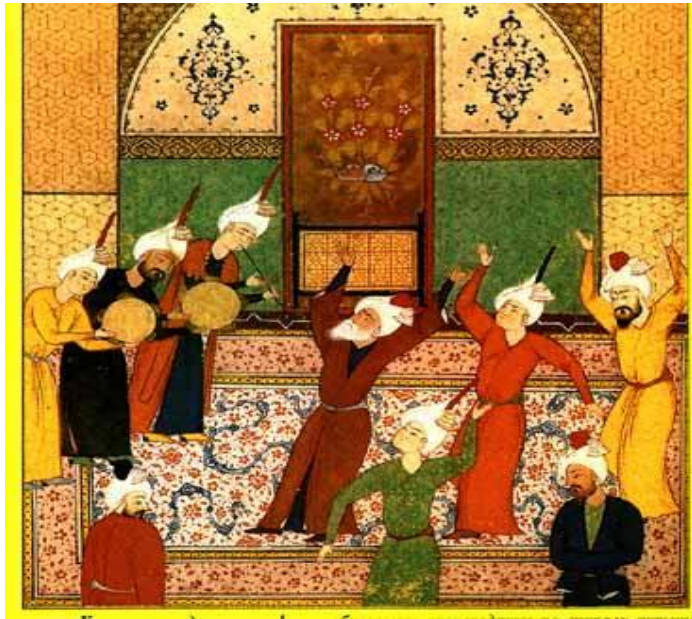
You made the night, I made the lamp;  
You made the earthen bowl, I made the goblet.  
You made deserts, mountains and valleys;  
I made gardens, meadows and parks.  
I am one who makes a mirror out of stone,  
And turns poison into sweet, delicious drink.<sup>868</sup>

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<sup>868</sup> M. Iqbal, *Tulip in the Desert*, London: C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., 2000, p. 20



*Medieval painting of dancing Sufis*



And in another poem, Iqbal sets up a conversation between knowledge and love. The unearthing of secrets, the capture of the world, the attachment to the sensory world and the transparency of the market, all attributed to knowledge, describe the world of Technopolis:

KNOWLEDGE

My eyes have witnessed

The secrets of the seven and the four,

And with my lasso I have captured the world.

I am an eye, and when I was opened I turned this way –

Why should I bother about the other side of the heavens?

A hundred songs flow from my instrument;

I bring to market every secret I know.

In the response this stance is understood as a magical spell with malevolent effects. The world is turned upside down, burnt up and made old. It requires the countervailing force of embedding. Modern knowledge is not rejected, but should be fused with embedding to turn the world into a home again:

## LOVE

Because of the spell you have cast the sea is in flames,  
The air spews fire and is filled with poison.  
When you and I were friends, you were a light;  
But you broke with me, and your light became a fire.  
You were born in the innermost sanctum of the Divinity,  
But then fell into Satan's trap.  
Come – turn this earthly world into a garden,  
And make the old world young again.  
Come – take just a little of my heart's solicitude,  
And build, under the heavens, an everlasting paradise.  
We have been on intimate terms since the day of creation,  
And are the high and low notes of the same song.<sup>869</sup>

With his concept of *khudi* ("soul"), Iqbal had a source for taming the fire of subjectivity. From an embracing stance, his vision was that of embedding Technopolis.

### *The Future of the Land without History*<sup>870</sup>

Just like the world of Islam, sub-Saharan Africa seems to be inimical to modernization. It is however, not so much the revolt against external forces as it is the internal ravage that these countries are noted for. Weak economies, rampant poverty, corruption, violence and disease are for many the shape that modernization has in Africa.

One problematic factor in the capacity to fuse traditional culture with modernity is the prevalence of tribalism, which we identified as an impediment to this process. In small-scale

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<sup>869</sup> Idem, p. 61

<sup>870</sup> Hegel described Africa as the land without history. G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, p. 129

tribal societies, the traditional embedding is strictly connected with a certain social and natural context. When this context disappears, like we saw in the case of the Crow tribe of Indians, the traditional framework ceases to make sense. The categories and practices that turned the world into a home no longer refer to anything. In the modern context, people are bastardized and fall into a jungle of chaos. Driven from their tightly knit rural communities, the young Africans in the growing metropolises of the continent and specifically in the shantytowns, come into a world in which everything that was solid has melted into air and there is a war of all against all. It shows the process of deformation in a large part of the continent.

This is not to say that there are no ways for tribal societies to connect with modernity and embed it, only that the challenge is greater. In the case of the Crow tribe, we saw that a prospect of hope came from following the way of the chickadee, a tradition symbol that was transformed to be a guide in the modern world. The tradition tribal community is under pressure in modernity and it is the task of people to find symbols or ethics that can be disconnected from this environment, so that they can be projected onto the modern plain. One interesting concept in this direction is that of *ubuntu*. It is a concept that is used in many African countries and propagated by Nelson Mandela and bishop Desmond Tutu. The concept is the idea that an individual can only exist in relation to others. It is easy to see how this concept makes sense in a tribal world where people are strongly defined by the roles they fulfill. But by detaching it from these traditional roles and turning it into a general concept, it has transformational potential if it has strong roots with people. It could be a way to define community in modernity's individualism and thus ground and embed subjectivity. By looking at concepts like this we can glimpse what a transformation of African embedding in the context of modernity could look like.

Another way through which the breakdown of the traditional conceptual framework is responded to is by the adoption of other religions. The large spreading of Christianity and Islam in Africa has much to do with the way they provide a moral framework and spiritual directedness that is applicable to the conditions of modernity.

But there are other ways in which modernity can be dealt with within the framework of tribal society. Botswana provides a strong example of this. This large country has traditionally been populated by scattered tribes. One important feature of these tribes is that their ethic is not very military. Landlocked as this region is, it has traditionally been surrounded by powerful foreigners, other tribes and white settlers that have imposed themselves on these tribes. The response of the less powerful tribes in the area that is now Botswana has been to be highly cooperative amongst each other and diplomatic against foreigners. According to a Setswana proverb "the big battle should be fought with words"<sup>871</sup>. Respect for others, honesty and modesty were virtues that developed among these tribes. Moreover, the political system was grafted on top of tribal practices. The tribes have been and are still ruled by a chief, or *kgotla*.

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<sup>871</sup> S.R. Lewis, Jr., 'Explaining Botswana's Success, in: L. E. Harrison, P. L. Berger (eds), *Developing Cultures: Case Studies*, New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 9

Another Setswana saying holds that: “A chief is a chief by the will of the people”.<sup>872</sup> These tribes have long traditions of consultation. These consultative bodies were incorporated into the modern political system. From the small-scale level, consultation moved up all the way to national politics, a result of which the country has had an impressive democratic record. Furthermore, from a confident and vigorous embedding, the country’s elite has had an open and learning attitude towards others. Its top officials have been sent abroad to learn and have to take courses on the fields in which they make policy. We thus here see an example of the way in which tribal culture is fused with modernity to this way embed it.

But the tribal background in many parts of Africa makes it hard to create coherent states that are capable and enjoy legitimacy among the broad populace. The political arena of many of these countries is consumed by a struggle for power over other tribal allegiances. This is hard to overcome and a living and embodied idea of a national community is a way to make sense of and embed modernity. Countries that have a longer legacy in this field thus have an advantage to take up this task. It is one of the reasons for the success of Ghana in modernizing. Another important case in this respect is Ethiopia. Although it suffers from poverty as a result of disastrous policies, it can trace itself back with Biblical references as one of the world’s oldest countries. This gave the country a coherence and strength with which it fought off Italian armies and proudly makes it the only country in Africa that was not colonized. From such a tradition, the country holds to potential of successfully embedding Technopolis.

## **F). By Way of a Conclusion**

The concept of Embedding Technopolis sheds a new light on the psycho-politics of our age. Starting from the most visible phenomena in Chapter I, we have ventured deeper and deeper into the human spirit to find the hidden sources that put us in motion. From them, we are pointed into other directions than those discerned by the great diagnoses of our time.

Francis Fukuyama’s majestic interpretation of the End of History brought together a wide range of impulses in a general theory. His claim that history ends in capitalist democracy corresponds to and was an inspiration for our idea of universal modernization. Our reinterpretation of this in terms of the unfolding of Technopolis made it possible to look under the skin of modernization and decipher what it means for the human condition. At core, it is not about forms of economic and political organization that displace others. It is about a force that has come into the world that brings with it a new way of relating. As seductive as its magical powers are for us, it also puts the issue of meaning at stake. And this is how we could interpret the persistence of traditional culture in terms of the deep human longing for

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<sup>872</sup> Idem, p. 7

embedding. Fukuyama sensed this deeper structure when he noted that at the End of History all human greatness, art, philosophy, exploration of the earth, would end and make place for a sense of boredom. But can this be understood as the result of our desires being met (capitalism) and the recognition of the worth of all human beings (democracy)? The boredom and the threat to greatness come from the way of relating that renders the world meaningless. We can no longer travel the world like Marco Polo not because our bellies are full (we can re-create such conditions), but because our way of relating to the world is that of a tourist or as a hobby. What clouds the poet's eye is that wherever he looks, he finds a transparent man-made world that holds no secrets. But then again, our investigation also points us to look beyond this. Underneath this technopolitical world, powerful forces of tact and embedding reside. Behind the façade of the uniform world lies a diversity of inner springs that cast us in form. What is at stake is not the spreading of certain forms of organization, but a task of embedding the modern way of relating.

Samuel Huntington's thesis of the Clash of Civilizations brings to the fore the relevance of traditional culture. In his whole book, the identification of what constitutes culture, or a civilization, is the briefest section and so he never goes to the heart of what drives people in his new paradigm. As a book on strategy, some parts are elucidating and others are not, but as it touches philosophical anthropology, it falls short. By placing it in the context of a perennial battle between Christianity and Islam, that goes back to at least the Crusades, he does not penetrate into what is really the issue in radical Islam. From our investigation of the phenomenon, we can see how it does not involve a war with the West, but a war with itself. It emerges from the vexing inner ground on which modernity and tradition deform and it is from this ground that a new form can emerge. Islamic scholars debate over whether Jihad refers mostly to an inner battle between good and evil or also to an external battle against others. From the standpoint of psycho-politics however, it is clear that this external battle in essence, is an internal struggle.

There are points of comparison between our investigation and Benjamin Barber's thesis of Jihad versus McWorld. What he describes as McWorld resembles our concept of Technopolis and its battle with Jihad is related to our issue of embedding. But without clearly placing these two forces in the context of what it means for the human condition, he misses to see central phenomena and looks for the problem and its solution in the wrong direction. For Barber, the battle is one between the individual and community. But in terms of the issue of the loss of meaning, this distinction falls short. Although Technopolis does foster individualism, the individual, withdrawn from society, can find in him- or herself the sources of embedding. And many modern communities may for Barber seem like a response to modernity, but they can be just as detached as any individualist pursuit. As this is the distinction along which Barber interprets our time, he looks for the solution in the setting in which the individual and the community are there for each other, i.e. democracy. Although democracy can contribute to countering modernity's problems, it remains within the framework of Technopolis. Barber does speak of a civic culture in addition to the simple votes of free subjects, but he does not see how traditional embedding is a central source of meaning and as such is the place to look in the condition of the loss of the life world. Not penetrating to this level of analysis, he sees a

world in which the prospects for democracy are bleak as both Jihad and McWorld move away from it. He thus does not see the phenomenon of a society that is cast in form when modernity and tradition are transformed.

The bleak prospects of both Huntington and Barber and the 'endism' of Fukuyama lead us away from seeing the dynamic character of the world we are in, with its profound tasks and many possibilities.

What we need to emphasize, especially after our venture into the future of countries that are modernizing, is that the task of embedding is not a one-time feat, through which a foundation is created on which societies can stand indefinitely. When after a testing and trying on the inner middle ground a great form emerges, society ignites with a new found sense of direction. Such events are what we have called critical shaping moments in chapter III. These create moulds and thus leave a stamp or legacy for the future. But as moulds grow old and Technopolis is ever in motion, a new form crisis can result. Societies then need to turn inward again. We noted how the form created in Japan with the Meiji Restoration energized the country for subsequent decades. With the Second World War, this form proved to be inadequate and a new one was found in projecting its warrior spirit entirely into the economy. In the Netherlands, we came across a trait of 'stubborn localism'. In the context of the early twentieth century and the height of nation-states, the Netherlands dealt with this through its so-called pillar system, that portioned society into different segments that locally organized everything, while at the top they worked together. This system developed under Cort Van der Linden, collapsed under the social changes of the sixties. With forces opposing each other and blocking changes, the Accord of Wassenaar in 1982 established a new pattern of stubborn localism in the economic sphere in a complex system of bargaining.

A society in form can thus break down in time and require a new embedding. Moreover, we see that different responses can exist together. We have spoken of societies in certain responses as a kind of general tone or current that permeates society. This does not mean that the whole of a society is drawn into this response. We have noted the variety of responses in Islamic societies, which sometimes can even exist together in one family. Moreover, while we have extensively studied several Western countries in form over the last decades, different impulses exist there too. A conservative current denies contemporary modernity, while this is placed against a powerful identification with Technopolis in the form of the financial markets that we described in the section of that response. With the global financial crisis, we see the task emerging of re-aligning this technopolitical force of local embedding. Indeed, in response to the crisis we have seen that the detached international bodies were not capable of responding to it, and people turned to their own form of embedding for solutions. From these embeddings a variety of responses emerged that are in tune with the diverse traditions. Moreover, from the magic and vertigo of ever-expanding financial markets, countries are thrown back to the real work and the task of finding what energizes them.

The different responses stand in a complex dynamic relation to each other, together constituting the inner middle ground. In different ways, they deal with the two hypostases in the human condition, Technopolis and embeddedness. Because we are looking here into the depths of human springs, it is impossible to ascribe to it a certain logic or determinable path. It does seem that the more complex responses of conquest and transformation require the other two to emerge. Denial shows the value and longing for a once living tradition and identification makes it impossible to close our eyes for the force emanating from modernity. Depending on the confidence and strength of our position, we can be drawn to either conquest or transformation to resolve this inner tension. The course we take places past and present in a new light from which we find new heroes and villains and build a new story. Will Technopolis ever destroy the human need for embedding? We have seen that it needs a deeper foundation and cannot stand on itself. We have also seen that behind the clearest expression of modern uniformity, an inwardly felt sense of tact can reside.

In its intangible guise it can, like water, flow into any place. From what we have seen, we have reason to believe that in the coldest and darkest desert night, man can turn the world into a home.

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## Samenvatting

### Het Inbedden van Technopolis

Het is een gangbare opvatting dat lokale traditionele cultuur in de moderne samenleving slechts als residu voortbestaat. Zij is te vinden in resten als kleding en eetgewoonten en in musea. Als traditionele cultuur nog als levend geheel voortbestaat, dan toch slechts in een reservaat, zoals bijvoorbeeld de Maori of de Amerikaanse Indianen. Slechts zo is te ontkomen aan de dominante cultuur die modern en globaal van aard is en de wereld omvormt tot een 'global village'. Momenteel maken opkomende landen in versneld tempo een modernisering door die in het Westen reeds lang is voltrokken. In China maakt de symbolische kraanvogel plaats voor de kraanmachine en wordt het 'koninkrijk van het midden' vervangen door wolkenkrabbers. Klopt deze opvatting echter wel? Wat nu als traditionele cultuur niet alleen in reservaten voortbestaat, maar ook binnen onze moderne wereld een centrale plaats heeft?

Het proces van modernisering zal in dit onderzoek geduid worden als de ontvouwing van wat wij Technopolis noemen. Technopolis benoemt een verhoudingswijze waarin de wereld geneutraliseerd wordt, ruimte en tijd 'leeg' worden gemaakt en de mens in Descartes' woorden 'meester en bezitter' van de natuur wordt. Technopolis brengt een proces van onthechting met zich mee, terwijl de menselijke conditie gekenmerkt wordt door een noodzaak tot inbedding. De onthechtende werking van de Technopolis wordt gedempt doordat traditionele cultuur zich hecht aan de structuren en instituties van de moderniteit en er een symbiotische relatie mee aangaat. In dit proces worden zowel traditionele cultuur als moderniteit getransformeerd, wat leidt tot 'meerdere moderniteiten'. Wij beargumenteren in dit onderzoek dat traditionele cultuur niet zozeer voortbestaat in folklore (residuen) of reservaten, maar leeft in het hart van de moderne wereld, in bedrijfsorganisatie, macro-economische verhoudingen en democratische politiek.

Om deze thematiek te onderzoeken luidt de centrale onderzoeksvraag van deze studie: Hoe verhouden de universele krachten van het proces van modernisering zich tot de diversiteit in menselijke cultuur die stamt uit lokale tradities en wat voor implicaties heeft dit voor de menselijke conditie?

Om deze vraag te kunnen beantwoorden moeten wij eerst begrijpen wat het proces van modernisering behelst. Dit wordt in hoofdstuk I onderzocht. Wij zullen een richting in het proces van modernisering ontwaren op vier gebieden. In de economie, op socio-demografisch gebied, in de staatsvorming en in het regimetype vinden wij een universele ontwikkeling in een bepaalde richting en deze gebieden zijn bovendien met elkaar verbonden.

Hiermee bevestigen wij de these van 'Modernization Theory' dat er zoiets is als een totaalpakket van modernisering, culminerend in de opkomst van 'de moderne mens'.

In hoofdstuk II zullen wij zien dat het moderniseringsproces slechts een partieel begrip geeft van onze wereld. Alhoewel universele modernisering een groot deel van de maatschappelijke context van traditionele cultuur wegvaagt, blijft veel van die cultuur – weliswaar in een nieuwe vorm – behouden. Niet tegen, maar *binnen* het domein van de moderniteit werkt traditionele cultuur door. Om deze stelling te onderbouwen, zullen wij in eerste instantie kijken naar de rol van de moderne staat in de opkomst van economieën in Oost- Azië. Waar men geneigd zou zijn om hierin het verdwijnen van tradities te zien, zal betoogd worden dat deze moderne staat zijn bron en vitaliteit juist vindt in lokale tradities. Vervolgens zullen wij kijken naar industriële structuur. De aanwezigheid van verschillende typen ondernemingen in verschillende landen moet worden begrepen in het licht van lokale ontwikkelingstrajecten en tradities. Tenslotte zal gekeken worden naar het regimetype van de moderne democratie. De vitaliteit van verschillende democratische regimes zal gerelateerd worden aan traditionele vormen van sociale organisatie en praktijken van bestuur. Aan het eind van dit tweede hoofdstuk zal beargumenteerd worden, dat niet alleen in de bestudeerde concrete gevallen, maar ook in algemene zin de structuren van de moderniteit inbedding vereisen in traditionele cultuur.

In hoofdstuk III zullen wij dit concept van de relatie tussen de krachten van modernisering en traditionele cultuur verder uitdiepen aan de hand van vijf nationale paden van modernisering in het Westen. Dit omdat het Westen vaak als een monolithisch blok wordt gezien, maar ook omdat moderniteit in het Westen zijn oorsprong vond (en daarmee de meest uitgebreide ervaring met de hier onderzochte dynamiek kent) is het relevant om hier grondiger naar te kijken. De dynamiek tussen modernisering en traditionele cultuur in Engeland, Frankrijk, Nederland, Duitsland en de Verenigde Staten zal onderzocht worden. Wij zullen zien dat er patronen in deze landen te ontwaren zijn die doorheen de verschillende domeinen van de maatschappij werken. Deze culturele patronen worden in kaart gebracht en geanalyseerd aan de hand van concepten als ‘ethos’, ‘structurele verwantschap’ en ‘stijl’.

Ons onderzoek naar de culturele inbedding van moderniseringsprocessen biedt tevens antropologische inzichten in de dynamiek tussen de mens en zijn leefwereld. In hoofdstukken IV en V zal ons perspectief daarom verschuiven naar een filosofische antropologie.

In hoofdstuk IV zullen wij de twee polen van modernisering en traditionele cultuur eerst los van elkaar analyseren. Modernisering bekeken vanuit de invloed op de menselijke conditie zal begrepen worden als dat wat wij hierboven al Technopolis hebben genoemd. Dit is de tendens of visie die in het proces van modernisering schuilt. Technopolis verwijst naar een verhoudingswijze die uiteengezet zal worden aan de hand van de neutralisering van de wereld, het menselijk subject als magiër, de relatie van mens tot wereld als één van onthechting en de radicale reorganisatie van mens en wereld. Net als in eerdere hoofdstukken betoogd wordt dat modernisering een culturele traditie vergt, geldt op het niveau van de menselijke conditie dat er een verhoudingswijze is die voorafgaat aan die van Technopolis. Traditionele cultuur zal in dit opzicht geduid worden als de wereld van ‘inbedding’. Dit zal uiteengezet worden aan de hand van concepten als lokale betrokkenheid, tactiliteit, in-vorm-zijn en een verhouding van afstemming. Waar Technopolis een homogene en lege ruimte en

tijd impliceert, wordt de wereld van inbedding gekarakteriseerd door sferische ruimte en ritmische tijd.

In hoofdstuk V wordt ten slotte gekeken naar de relatie van de wereld van Technopolis tot die van inbedding in de menselijke conditie. Deze relatie zal geduid worden vanuit de basiservaring dat de wereld van inbedding uitgedaagd wordt door de wereld van Technopolis. Vanuit verschillende reacties zal een ‘psycho-politieke’ analyse van verscheidene fenomenen gemaakt worden. In drie reacties blijft de spanning tussen Technopolis en inbedding bestaan, wat het floreren van menselijk leven bemoeilijkt en die reacties zullen wij daarom karakteriseren als deformaties. Dit geldt voor de reacties van ‘ontkenning’ (die wij kunnen ontwaren bij Amerikaanse Indianen, een aantal Arabische regimes en conservatieven), ‘identificatie’ (futurisme, communisme en modernisme) en ‘verovering’ (Hindu nationalisme, Chinese Boxers, Nazisme en radicale Islam). In contrast met deze deformerende reacties, is het ook mogelijk om Technopolis en inbedding met elkaar te binden in een symbiotische relatie. In dit geval zullen wij spreken van ‘transformatie’. In deze reactie wordt er een ‘huis’ gemaakt in de wereld van Technopolis waarin moderniteit en traditionele cultuur beide getransformeerd worden. Wij zullen eindigen met een tentatieve bespiegeling over toekomstige transformaties vanuit het conceptueel kader dat in dit onderzoek ontwikkeld is. Zo proberen wij zicht te krijgen op de centrale opgave van het ‘inbedden van Technopolis’.